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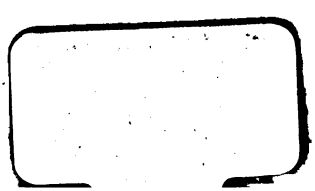

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London. Published March, 1802, by T. Cadell & W. Davies. Strand.

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THE

MISCELLANEOUS WORKS

OLIVER GOLDSMITH, M. B.

A NEW EDITION, IN FOUR VOLUMES.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED

SOME ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE AND WRITINGS.

VOL. I.

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In collecting and republishing these scattered productions of a writer who has deserved by the simple and enchanting graces of his style (both in prose and rhyme) to be esteemed as a Classic in our language, the Editor conceives that he cannot more properly recommend them to the notice of the Public, than by transcribing the brief but comprehensive Eulogy which Dr. Johnson has bestowed on Goldsmith:

"He was a man of such variety of powers, and such felicity of performance, that he always seemed to do best that which he was doing; a man who had the art of being minute without tediousness, and general without confusion; whose language was copious without exuberance, exact without constraint, and easy without weakness."

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The account of his life is composed from the information of persons who were intimate with the Poet at an early period, and who were honoured with a continuance of his friendship till the time when the world was deprived of this fascinating writer. Their names, were the Editor at liberty to mention them, would immediately dispel all doubts as to the authenticity of the Memoirs, and reflect distinguished credit on the publication.

In addition to the acknowledged performances of our Author, the Editor has introduced into these volumes several Essays, which appeared in the periodical works of the day, and which he has ascertained to have proceeded from the pen of Dr. Goldsmith.

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THE LIFE

OF

DR. OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

"THE life of a scholar," our author observes in the account prefixed to the Works of Parnell, "seldom abounds with adventures. His fame is acquired in solitude. And the historian, who only views him at a distance, must be content with a dry detail of actions by which he is scarcely distinguished from the rest of mankind."—This is indeed true with respect to the generality of writers, whose lives, marked with few incidents, and those of an uninteresting nature, are passed in study, and too frequently in obscurity.—Very different indeed was the fate of Dr. Goldsmith, the events of whose life were various and checquered, and whose memoirs are replete with curious and entertaining matter.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH was born on the twenty-ninth day of November, 1728, at a place called Pallas, in the parish of Forney and county of Longford, in Ireland. His father, the Rev. Charles Goldsmith, a native of the county of Roscommon, was a clergyman of the Established Church, and had been

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educated at Dublin College. Though he afterwards obtained the living of Kilkenny West, in the county of Westmeath, yet before he had acquired any preferment, he married Anne, daughter of the Rev. Oliver Jones, master of the Diocesan School of Elphin*. Her mother's brother, the Rev. Mr. Green, at that time rector of Kilkenny West, lent the young couple the house in which our poet was born; and at his death the Rev. Charles Goldsmith succeeded him in his benefice.

It was a tradition in our poet's family, that they were descended from a Spanish gentleman named Juan Romeiro, who had sometime in the sixteenth century come into Ireland with a Spanish nobleman, to whom, with modern ideas, they supposed him to have been tutor or guardian; and that settling in Ireland, from a marriage with a wife of the name of Goldsmith, his descendants assumed her English name.

Although Oliver had evidently his Christian name from his mother's father, yet he used to assert, that it had been introduced into her family by some affinity or connexion with that of the Protector, Oliver Cromwell: he also claimed kindred to that of General Wolfe.

Of our poet's early life and character, and of some remarkable adventures at school and at college, we have a curious account by his eldest

* Communicated by the Right Reverend Dr. Law, bishop of Elphin.

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sister, Catharine, wife of Daniel Hodson, Esq.* which, in some measure corrected and abridged, we shall present to the reader.

"The Rev. Charles Goldsmith is allowed by all who knew him, to have been faithfully represented by his son in the character of the Village Preacher in his poem. He had seven children, viz. five sons and two daughters. Of his eldest son, the Rev. Henry Goldsmith, to whom his brother dedicated his 'Traveller,' their father had formed the most sanguine hopes, as he had distinguished himself both at school and at college; but he unfortunately married at the early age of nineteen, which confined him to a curacy, and prevented his rising to preferment in the church.

"Oliver was his second son, and born, very unexpectedly, after an interval of seven years from the birth of the former child; and the liberal education which their father was then bestowing on his eldest son, bearing hard upon his small income, he could only propose to bring up Oliver to some mercantile employment.

"With this view he was instructed in reading, writing, and arithmetic, by a school-master in his father's village, who had been a quarter-master in the army in Queen Anne's wars, in that detachment which was sent to Spain: having travelled over a considerable part of Europe, and being of a very romantic turn, he used to entertain Oliver with his adventures; and the impressions these

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made on his scholar were believed by the family to have given him that wandering and unsettled turn which so much appeared in his future life.

"Oliver, however, was from his earliest infancy very different from other children; subject to particular humours, for the most part uncommonly serious and reserved, but when in gay spirits none ever so agreeable as he*; and he began at so early a period to shew signs of genius, that he quickly engaged the notice of all the friends of the family, many of whom were in the Church. At the age of seven or eight he discovered a natural turn for rhyming, and often amused his father and his friends with early poetical attempts. When he could scarcely write legibly, he was always scribbling verses, which he burnt as he wrote them.

"Observing his fondness for books and learning, his mother, with whom he was always a favourite, pleaded with his father to give him a liberal education: but his own narrow income, the expense

* Mrs. Hodson has in this slight sketch, probably without knowing it, pourtrayed every feature of the little Edwin in Beattie's celebrated poem of "The Minstrel:"

> ——— He was no vulgar boy,
> Deep thought oft seem'd to fix his infant eye,
> Dainties he heeded not, nor gaud, nor toy,
> Save one short pipe of rudest minstrelsie.
> Silent when glad, affectionate yet shy:
> And now his look was most demurely sad,
> And now he laugh'd aloud, yet knew not why.

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attending the educating of his eldest son, and his numerous family, were strong objections. Oliver in the mean time was placed under the Rev. Mr. Griffin, then schoolmaster of Elphin, and was received into the house of his father's brother, John Goldsmith, Esq. of Ballyoughter near that town, who with his family considered him as a prodigy for his age, and have handed down the following instance of his early wit.

"A large company of young people of both sexes were assembled one evening at his uncle's, and Oliver, then but nine years old, was required to dance a hornpipe, a youth playing to them at the same time on a fiddle. Being but newly recovered from the small-pox, by which he was much disfigured, and his figure being short and thick, the musician, very archly as he supposed, compared him to Æsop dancing; and still harping on this idea, which he conceived to be very bright, our conceited gentleman had suddenly the laugh turned against him, by Oliver's stopping short in the dance with this retort:

> Our herald hath proclaim'd this saying,
> See Æsop dancing, and his monkey playing.

This smart reply decided his fortune, for from that time it was determined to send him to the University, and some of the relations, who were respectable clergymen, kindly offered to contribute towards the expense, particularly the Rev. Thomas

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Contarine, who had married Oliver's aunt, a gentleman of distinguished learning and good preferment*.

"With this view he was removed to the school of Athlone, about five miles from his father's house, and was for about two years there under the Rev. Mr. Campbell, who had the character of being an ingenious master; but he being obliged to resign the school for want of health, Oliver was sent to the Rev. Patrick Hughes, at Edgeworthstown, in the county of Longford, where he was fitted for the University†.

"In his last journey to this school, he had an adventure which is thought to have suggested the plot of his Comedy, 'The Mistakes of a Night.'

"Some friend had given him a guinea, and in his way to Edgeworthstown, which is about twenty miles from his father's house, he had diverted himself the whole day by viewing the gentlemen's seats on the road, until, at the fall of night, he found himself in a small town named Ardagh. Here he inquired for the best house in the place, meaning an inn, but, being understood too literally, he was shewn to the house of a private gentleman, where

* The Rev. Mr. Green also liberally assisted, as Dr. Goldsmith used to relate, in this beneficent purpose.

† From the last master he profited more than from either of the others, as he conversed with him on a footing very different from that of master and scholar. This circumstance Dr. Goldsmith always mentioned with respect and gratitude.

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calling for somebody to take his horse and lead him to the stable, he alighted and was shewn into the parlour, being supposed to be a guest come to visit the master, whom he found sitting by a good fire. This gentleman immediately discovered Oliver's mistake; and being a man of humour, and also learning from him the name of his father, who happened to be his acquaintance, he encouraged his deception. Oliver accordingly called about him, ordered a good supper, and generously invited the master, his wife, and daughters, to partake of it; treated them with a bottle or two of wine, and at going to bed ordered a hot cake to be prepared for his breakfast: nor was it till at his departure, when he called for the bill, that he found he had been hospitably entertained in a private family.

"In the June following, 1744, Oliver was sent to Dublin College, and entered under the Rev. Mr. Wilder, one of the fellows, to whom, as he was the son of a neighbouring gentleman, the young pupil was particularly recommended. But he was a man of harsh temper and violent passions, and Oliver no less thoughtless and unguarded, so that they very soon disagreed. Oliver formed some acquaintance in the city of Dublin, and was indiscreet enough to invite company of both sexes to partake of a supper and a dance in his rooms. This circumstance, unfortunately for our poet, came to the ears of his tutor, who abruptly entered in the midst of all their gaiety, which he soon extinguished; for he not

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only proceeded to the highest excess of personal abuse, but concluded with manual chastisement before all the company.

"The disgrace attending this cruel treatment drove the poor lad into despair; and he determined never more to see any of his friends, but to remove to some other country, where, totally unknown, he might seek his fortune. He accordingly disposed of his books and clothes, and left the college; but loitered about in Dublin, till he had only a shilling left in his pocket when he set out on his travels. His intention was to go on ship-board at Cork for some other country, he knew not whither.

"On this shilling he supported himself, as he affirmed, for three days, and then parting by degrees with the clothes off his back, was reduced to such extremity of famine, that, after fasting twenty-four hours, he thought a handful of grey peas, given him by a girl at a wake, the most comfortable repast he ever made. By this time he began to be sensible of his folly, and, like the prodigal son, desirous of returning to his indulgent father. From his father's house he now was not so distant but that he contrived to send to his brother, who came to him, clothed and carried him back to college, where he effected something of a reconciliation with his tutor, but, as may easily be imagined, they were never afterwards on cordial terms.

"Soon after this event his worthy father died, of whom he gives an account in 'The Citizen of the

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World,' under the character of the Man in black. His good uncle Contarine endeavoured to supply his loss, and wished him to prepare for holy orders. But for the clerical profession he had no liking, having always a strong inclination for visiting foreign countries; and when he did apply to the bishop, he was rejected because he was too young*. His uncle, however, procured him the office of private tutor in the family of a neighbouring gentleman, where he continued about a year: but being averse to the necessary confinement, he quitted his friends, and having saved about thirty pounds, and procured a good horse, he left the country.

"His friends, after an absence of six weeks without having heard what had become of him, concluded he had quitted the kingdom; when he suddenly returned to his mother's house without a penny, upon a poor little horse not worth twenty shillings, which he called Fiddle-Back. His mother, as might be expected, was highly offended, but his brothers and sisters had contrived to meet him there, and at length effected a reconciliation.

"Being required to account for the loss of his money and linen, and the horse on which he had departed; he told them that he had been at Cork, where he had sold his horse, and paid for his pas-

* The tradition in the diocese of Elphin is, that he was rejected by bishop Synge, to whom he offered himself a candidate, either because he had neglected the professional studies, or from a (perhaps exaggerated) report of irregularities at college.

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sage for America to a captain of a ship. But the winds proving contrary for three weeks, he had amused himself by seeing every thing curious in and about that city, and on the day the wind proved fair, being engaged with a party in an excursion into the country, his friend the captain had set sail without him. He continued in Cork till he had only two guineas left, out of which he paid forty shillings for Fiddle-Back, and when he wished to return home he had only the remaining crown* in his pocket. Although this was rather too little for a journey of a hundred and twenty miles, he had intended to visit on the road, not far from Cork, a dear friend he had known in college, who had often pressed him to spend a summer at his house, and on whose assistance he depended for supplies. In this expectation he had given half his little stock to a poor woman in his way, who had solicited relief for herself and eight children, their father having been seized for rent and thrown into jail.

"He found his friend just recovering from a severe illness; who received him in his cap and slippers, but expressed the greatest joy to see him, and eagerly inquired what agreeable occasion had so happily brought him into that country. Oliver, delighted to think his distresses were now at an end, concealed no part of them from his host: to gratify his fine feelings and to excite his sympathy,

* Two guineas in Irish currency is *2l. 5s. 6d.*

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he represented in the strongest terms not only his present destitute condition, but the little prospect he had of returning home, on account of having so highly disobliged his family; and observed, that it must be a work of time, and of long intercession, before he could again expect to be received into favour. The melancholy silence with which his affecting tale was heard, he attributed to the tenderest compassion; and the frequent sighs of his friend, as he walked about rubbing his hands and deeply lost in thought, consoled him under the dismal recital. The uncommon length of his friend's silence enabled him to renew the subject, and to expatiate on his hopeless situation, till it was at length terminated by his host's observing very drily, how inconvenient it was for him to receive company in his present state of weakness; that he had no provision in the house for a healthy person; he had nothing but slops and milk-diet for himself; of which, if he pleased, Mr. Goldsmith might partake, but he feared it would not soon be got ready. This was dismal news to our hungry traveller, who, alas! had fasted the whole day; and it was not till six o'clock when an old woman appeared and spread the table, on which she laid a small bowl of sagoe for her master, and a porringer of sour milk with a piece of brown bread for his guest. This being soon dispatched, the invalid pleaded the necessity of going early to bed, and left poor Oliver to his own meditations.

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"In the morning consulting with his friend on his unfortunate situation, he advised him to hasten home without loss of time, as his family must be highly offended at his absence. On this Oliver ventured to solicit the loan of a guinea for the support of himself and his horse on the road. Here again his host gravely advised him against running in debt, and urged that his own illness had deprived him of all his cash. But, my dear friend, said he, you may sell your horse for money sufficient to bear your charges, and I will furnish you with another for the journey. When Oliver desired him to produce this steed, he drew from under a bed an oaken staff. At which the poor youth was so provoked, that he was going to apply it to his pate, when a loud knocking at the gate gave notice of the approach of a visitant. This was a neighbouring gentleman of a very engaging aspect; to whom, as if nothing had happened, our traveller was presented as the very ingenious young friend who had been mentioned to him with such high encomiums while they were at college.

"The visit concluded with an invitation of the two friends to dine at that gentleman's house on the morrow. To this Oliver at first reluctantly consented; but as he really stood in want of a dinner, at length he went, and was highly pleased with the entertainment. In the evening, when they were about to return, their host, who had observed some glances which shewed all was not right between

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the two fellow-collegians, insisted that Mr. Goldsmith should stay and spend some days at his house; who at parting desired the other would take care of the horse he had so kindly offered him, and not surfeit his friends with their milk-diet. To this our gentleman only replied with a sneer, and left Oliver to tell all the circumstances of his treatment: at which his generous host laughed heartily, and assured him it agreed with his neighbour's general character.

"Here our wanderer was most hospitably entertained, and kindly urged to prolong his stay, with a liberal offer to be supplied with whatever money he should want, and a man and horse to attend him home. Oliver begged leave to depart at the end of three days: which were most agreeably spent in the company of this worthy gentleman and two beautiful daughters, who did all in their power to entertain and divert him. At his departure he refused the offer of the servant and the horse, and only accepted the loan of three half-guineas.

"And now, dear mother, he concluded, after having struggled so hard to come home to you, I wonder you are not more rejoiced to see me.—She and all present expressed their joy at his return, and enjoined him to transmit the most early and grateful acknowledgments to his kind benefactor.

"His uncle Contarine, who was also reconciled to him, now resolved to send him to the Temple, that he might make the Law his profession. But in

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his way to London, he met at Dublin with a sharper, who tempted him to play, and emptied his pockets of fifty pounds, with which he had been furnished for his voyage and journey.

"He was obliged again to return to his poor mother, whose sorrow at his miscarriages need not be described, and his own distress and disgrace may readily be conceived. To make short of the story, he was again forgiven, his good uncle received him once more into favour, and it was finally decided that he should now be bred to the study of Physic. With this view he was sent to Edinburgh. From that time the writer of this narrative was a stranger to his history; but she hath seen letters to his friends, which he wrote from Switzerland, Germany, and Italy."

We were unwilling to interrupt the thread of this narrative with dates and extracts from the college register. But these, with some additional anecdotes, we shall now supply.

Of his entrance at college we have the following record*:

1744. *Jun.* 11. *Olivarius Goldsmith, Siz. filius Caroli, Clerici, ann. agens* 15, *natus in comitatu Westmeath* †, *educatus sub ferula Mi. Hughes, admissus est. Tutor M. Wilder.*

* Communicated to Mr. Malone by the Rev. Dr. Thomas Wilson, late fellow of Trinity College, Dublin.

† His father being then settled in Westmeath, occasioned this mistake of the County in which he was supposed to be born.

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His being admitted a sizer in Trinity College, Dublin, at that early age, denotes a remarkable proficiency. Sizers there are expected to come better prepared than other boys, and therefore usually apply for admission somewhat later in life.

But, whatever hopes might have been formed of his attaining here the distinctions of genius and learning, they were completely blasted by the unfortunate quarrel which we have related, between him and his tutor, Theaker Wilder, a man of the most morose and merciless temper, who thenceforth persecuted him with unremitted cruelty, especially at the quarterly examinations, when he would insult him before his fellow-students by sarcastic taunts and ironical applauses of the severest malignity.

Under this savage tutor poor Goldsmith was exposed to so many mortifications, that the consequence was habitual despondence and its concomitant idleness. One of his contemporaries describes him as "perpetually lounging about the college-gate." The very same is recorded of Johnson;* and shews that these two distinguished writers rose to their eminence in literature from the most unpromising beginnings.

In such circumstances it was not to be expected that Goldsmith could be a candidate for the usual premiums, nor are we to wonder that he did not obtain a scholarship: yet on June 15th, 1747, he

* See Boswell's Life, &c. 8vo. Vol. I. p. 52.

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was elected one of the exhibitioners on the foundation of Erasmus Smyth*.

He had not long before been publicly censured for being concerned with many other students in raising a great tumult in the city, occasioned by a scholar's having been arrested in a street adjoining to the college.

The precincts of the university have always been held privileged from the intrusion of bailiffs. In the spring of the year 1747, this privilege was said to have been violated. To revenge this supposed insult, a numerous body of scholars rushed into the town, explored the dens of the bailiffs, and conducting the prisoner in triumph to the college, pumped them severely in an old cistern. It was then proposed to them by a leader of their riots, to break open Newgate and make a general gaol-delivery. The enterprise was attempted; but the assailants were beat off by artillery: and some unfortunate spectators were reported to have lost their lives.

Several of the ringleaders were expelled the university; but Goldsmith, having made an ingenuous confession, was only punished by a public admonition, on May 25, 1747†.

Although Goldsmith's indolence was grown habitual, his genius sometimes dawned through the gloom. Translations from the classics occasionally

* So Dr. Wilson.

† In the words of the sentence, *Quod seditioni favisset et tumultuantibus opem tulisset.* So Dr. Wilson.

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made by him at this period, are still remembered by his contemporaries* with applause. But not having attained the usual distinctions, and the character of a Sizer in that university who misses both premiums and a scholarship, being little respected, his residence in college grew daily less eligible, so that probably he retired into the country, and came to Dublin only to answer for his degree, and to commence.

He was not indeed admitted to the degree of Bachelor of Arts till February 27, 1749, O.S. two years after the regular time†.

The loss of his father was now supplied to him by his uncle, the Rev. Thomas Contarine‡, whose

* Communicated by the Rev. Mr. Wolfen.

† So Dr. Wilson. The college register having been lately examined, the above entry could not be found.

‡ This respectable clergyman, who was rector of Kilmore, near Carrick-upon-Shannon, had been contemporary in Dublin College with Berkeley, the celebrated bishop of Cloyne, and continued in habits of intimacy with him during their lives. He is even reported to have saved the life of that philosopher, in the course of the well-known experiment in which he engaged for the purpose of forming a judgment of the degrees of pain suffered by suffocation.

The history of Mr. Contarine's family is too remarkable not to deserve a place in a note. He was lineally descended from the noble family of the Contarini of Venice; one of the most illustrious in that republic. In Roman Catholic countries the younger sons and daughters of the highest descent are often condemned to monastic life and vows of celibacy. The ancestor of our poet's uncle, by a double violation of this law,

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penetration probably enabled him to see the brilliancy of Oliver's genius, through all the dark shades which obscured and nearly overwhelmed it.

married a noble nun. Being obliged to fly with the partner of his guilt, or indiscretion, they first sought refuge in France, where his wife died of the small-pox. Being there pursued by ecclesiastical censures, Contarini retired to England; but the puritanical manners which at that time prevailed affording him but a cold reception, he was on his removal to Ireland, when at Chester he met with a young lady of the name of Chaloner, related to Dr. Chaloner, sometime provost of Trinity College, Dublin. To her personal accomplishments she added a considerable proficiency in the Italian language; and the pleasure they derived from each other's conversation led to a more interesting attachment, which terminated in their marriage. Conforming afterwards to the Established Church, he by the interest of her family obtained ecclesiastical preferment in the diocese of Elphin: and their lineal descendant was the Rev. Mr. Contarine, whose unremitted kindness to our bard demanded this account of him from his biographer.

This worthy man left but one daughter, whom he saw happily married to James Lawder, Esq. of Kilmore, in the county of Roscommon, who was remarkable for the tragical termination of his life long after the death of our poet. This gentleman had bought at Dublin a strong iron chest to secure his papers and money; which exciting an opinion in his servants and labourers that it contained vast treasures, they conspired to murder the family and rob the house; and at the same time determined to burn a house in the neighbourhood, that they might the better escape during the confusion. Two of these objects they were unfortunately successful in accomplishing; after shooting the husband with his own blunderbuss, and supposing they had also dispatched the wife (though she indeed survived), they carried off the plate and about 300*l.* in money; and though they failed in burning the next house as they

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The persevering friendship of this good clergyman extended, as we have seen, his constant protection to him under every difficulty, till he had finally fixed him at Edinburgh, about the latter end of the year 1752, or the beginning of the following year.

Among many instances which might be mentioned of his heedlessness and absence at this period, the following may be recorded. Goldsmith, having on his arrival from Leith to Edinburgh employed a Cawdy, or porter, to take his luggage, set off in search of a lodging; which having taken and told the Cawdy to leave his portmanteau, he sallied forth to take a view of the city, without having inquired the name of his landlady, or that of the street in which she lived. Having wandered about till it was dark, he recollected his omission when it was too late to remedy it; and had he not fortunately met with the porter whom he had engaged in the morning, he might probably have remained all night in the street.

With this landlady he had agreed not only for lodging but board; but as the latter was very scantily supplied, of which he used to give a very ludicrous account, namely, that she made a leg of mutton, dished up in different modes, serve them for a week, a dish of broth being made from the

intended, they escaped for that time. But the plunder soon after detected the plunderers, and not fewer than six of these wretches were convicted and executed.

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bones on the seventh day, he found it expedient to remove to a lodging where were other students of medicine, whom he frequently entertained with his songs and stories. These endeavours to amuse, it must be confessed, were however, from an inordinate desire of gaining applause and of setting the table in a roar, too often blended with grimace and buffoonery, from which defects, notwithstanding he was afterwards introduced into the politest company, his conversation was never wholly exempt.

"The misfortune of Goldsmith in conversation," observed Dr. Johnson* several years after this period, whose opinion on this subject may with propriety be introduced in this place, "is this: he goes on without knowing how he is to get off. His genius is great, but his knowledge is small. As they say of a generous man, it is a pity he is not rich, we may say of Goldsmith, it is a pity he is not knowing. He would not keep his knowledge to himself."

The same author again observed†, that "Goldsmith should not be for ever attempting to shine in conversation; he has not temper for it, he is so much mortified when he fails. A game of jokes is composed partly of skill, partly of chance; a man may be beat at times by one who has not the tenth part of his wit. Now, Goldsmith's putting himself

* Boswell's Life of Johnson, 3d edit. Vol. II. p. 192.

† Ibid. p. 229.

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against another is like a man laying an hundred to one, who cannot spare the hundred. It is not worth a man's while. A man should not lay an hundred to one unless he can easily spare it, though he has a hundred chances for him; he can get but a guinea, and he may lose a hundred: Goldsmith is in this state. When he contends, if he gets the better, it is a very little addition to a man of his literary reputation; if he does not get the better, he is miserably vexed."

Here for some time he attended the lectures of Monroe, and the other professors in the medical line. But his attention to his studies was by no means regular; and his health was considerably injured, and his pocket frequently drained, by his too often mixing in scenes of dissipation. During that time he is said by some of his contemporaries to have given occasional proofs of his poetical talents. Nothing, however, of so early a date has been transmitted to us, excepting a private letter to a gentleman of his acquaintance in Ireland; which, on account of its ease and vivacity, we shall here introduce.

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TO ROBERT BRIANTON, ESQ.

AT BALLYMAHON, IRELAND.

Edinburgh, Sept. 26, 1753.

MY DEAR BOB,

How many good excuses (and you know I was ever good at an excuse) might I call up to vindicate my past shameful silence. I might tell how I wrote a long letter at my first coming hither: that business (with business, you know, I was always pestered) had never given me time to finger a pen. But I suppress that, and twenty more equally plausible, and as easily invented, since they might all be attended with a slight inconvenience—of being known to be lies. Let me then speak truth. An hereditary indolence (I have it from the mother's side) has hitherto prevented my writing to you, and still prevents my writing at least twenty-five letters more, due to my friends in Ireland. No turnspit gets up into his wheel with more reluctance than I sit down to write. Yet no dog ever loved the roast meat he turns better than I do him I now address. Yet what shall I say now I am entered? Shall I tire you with a description of this unfruitful country, where I must lead you over their hills all brown with heath, or their valleys scarcely able to feed a rabbit? Man alone seems to be the only creature who has arrived to the natural size in this poor soil. Every part of the country presents the same dismal landscape. No grove nor brook lend

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their music to cheer the stranger, or make the inhabitants forget their poverty. Yet with all these disadvantages, enough to call him down to humility, a Scotchman is one of the proudest things alive. The poor have pride ever ready to relieve them. If mankind should happen to despise them, they are masters of their own admiration, and that they can plentifully bestow upon themselves. From their pride and poverty, as I take it, results one advantage this country enjoys; namely, the gentlemen here are much better bred than among us. No such character here as our fox-hunter; and they have expressed great surprise when I informed them that some men of a thousand pounds a year in Ireland, spend their whole lives in running after a hare, drinking to be drunk, and getting every girl with child that will let them. And truly if such a being, equipped in his hunting dress, came among a circle of Scots gentlemen, they would behold him with the same astonishment that a countryman does King George on horseback. The men here have generally high cheek-bones, and are lean and swarthy, fond of action, dancing in particular. Though, now I have mentioned dancing, let me say something of their balls, which are very frequent here. When a stranger enters the dancing-hall, he sees one end of the room taken up by the ladies, who sit dismally in a groupe by themselves. On the other end stand their pensive partners that are to be. But no more intercourse between the sexes than there are between two

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countries at war. The ladies indeed may ogle, and the gentlemen sigh; but an embargo is laid on any closer commerce. At length, to interrupt hostilities, the lady directress, or intendant, or what you will, pitches on a gentleman and lady to walk a minuet; which they perform with a formality that approaches to despondence. After five or six couple have thus walked the gauntlet, all stand up to country-dances; each gentleman furnished with a partner from the aforesaid lady directress: so they dance much, say nothing, and thus concludes our assembly. I told a Scotch gentleman that such profound silence resembled the ancient procession of the Roman matrons in honour of Ceres; and the Scotch gentleman told me (and faith I believe he was right) that I was a very great pedant for my pains. Now I am come to the ladies, and to shew that I love Scotland and every thing that belongs to so charming a country, I insist on it, and will give him leave to break my head that denies it, that the Scotch ladies are ten thousand times finer and handsomer than the Irish. To be sure now I see your sisters Betty and Peggy vastly surprised at my partiality; but tell them flatly I don't value them a potatoe, their fine skins or eyes, or good sense, or—for I say and will maintain it; and as a convincing proof (I am in a great passion) of what I assert, the Scotch ladies say it themselves. But to be less serious, where will you find a language so prettily become a pretty mouth as the broad

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Scotch? And the women here speak it in its highest purity; for instance, teach one of the young ladies at home to pronounce the "*Whoar wull I gong*" with a becoming widening of mouth, and I'll lay my life they'll wound every hearer. We have no such character here as a coquette, but, alas! how many envious prudes! Some days ago, I walked into my Lord Kilcoubry's (don't be surprised, my lord is but a glover), when the Duchess of H. (that fair who sacrificed her beauty to ambition, and her inward peace to a title and gilt equipage) passed by in her chariot; her battered husband, or more properly the guardian of her charms, sat beside her. Straight envy began, in the shape of no less than three ladies who sat with me, to find faults in her faultless form. —"For my part," says the first, "I think, what I always thought, that the Duchess has too much of the red in her complexion."—"Madam, I am of your opinion," says the second; "I think her face has a palish cast, too much on the delicate order."—"And let me tell you," adds the third lady, whose mouth was puckered up so as scarcely to admit a pea, "that the Duchess has fine lips, but she wants a mouth." At this every lady drew up her mouth, as if going to pronounce the letter P. But how ill, my Bob, does it become me to ridicule women, with whom I have scarcely any correspondence? There are, 'tis certain, handsome women here; and 'tis as certain they have handsome men to keep them company. An ugly and a poor man is society only

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for himself; and such society the world lets me enjoy in great abundance. Fortune has given you circumstances, and nature a person to look charming in the eyes of the fair. Nor do I envy my dear Bob such blessings while I may sit down and laugh at the world, and at myself the most ridiculous object in it. But you see I am grown downright splenetic, and perhaps the fit may continue till I hear from you, And yet I know you can't send much news from Ireland; but such as it is, send it all. Every thing you write will be agreeable to

Your's, &c.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

When Goldsmith had attended the lectures, and gone through the usual courses at Edinburgh, he, with the consent of his beneficent uncle, was about to remove to Leyden, in order to complete his medical studies, when his departure is said to have been accelerated by a debt he had too generously but imprudently contracted, by being surety for a fellow-student. For this he was arrested, but soon released by the liberal assistance of two friends, Mr. Laughlane Maclane and Dr. Sleigh, who were then in college*. In his voyage to Holland he met with a

* This would not have deserved mention here, but that in the former memoirs of Dr. Goldsmith it is retailed at length, and said to have happened at Sunderland. But what occurred to him at Newcastle (as described below) is apparently the occasion of the mistake.

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very singular adventure, and had a very narrow escape from shipwreck, as appears from the following letter, in which he introduces his remarks on that country.

TO THE

REV. THOMAS CONTARINE.

Leyden, [*the date wanting.*]

DEAR SIR,

I SUPPOSE by this time I am accused of either neglect or ingratitude, and my silence imputed to my usual slowness of writing. But believe me, Sir, when I say, that till now I had not an opportunity of sitting down with that ease of mind which writing required. You may see by the top of the letter that I am at Leyden; but of my journey hither you must be informed. Sometime after the receipt of your last, I embarked for Bourdeaux, on board a Scotch ship called the St. Andrew's, Captain John Wall master. The ship made a tolerable appearance, and, as another inducement, I was let to know that six agreeable passengers were to be my company. Well, we were but two days at sea when a storm drove us into a city of England called Newcastle-upon-Tyne. We all went ashore to refresh us after the fatigue of our voyage. Seven men and I were one day on shore; and on the following evening, as we were all very merry, the room-door bursts open: enters a serjeant and twelve grenadiers with their

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bayonets screwed, and puts us all under the King's arrest. It seems, my company were Scotchmen in the French service, and had been in Scotland to enlist soldiers for the French army. I endeavoured all I could to prove my innocence: however, I remained in prison with the rest a fortnight, and with difficulty got off even then. Dear Sir, keep this all a secret, or at least say it was for debt*; for if it were once known at the university, I should hardly get a degree. But hear how Providence interposed in my favour: the ship was gone on to Bourdeaux before I got from prison, and was wrecked at the mouth of the Garonne, and every one of the crew were drowned. It happened the last great storm. There was a ship at that time ready for Holland: I embarked, and in nine days, thank my God! I arrived safe at Rotterdam; whence I travelled by land to Leyden, whence I now write.

You may expect some account of this country; and though I am not well qualified for such an undertaking, yet shall I endeavour to satisfy some part of your expectations. Nothing surprised me more than the books every day published descriptive of the manners of this country. Any young man who takes it into his head to publish his travels, visits

* This proposal seems absurd, but it may account for the report mentioned by some of his biographers, of his having been, on his putting to shore, arrested for a debt contracted at Edinburgh, &c.

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the countries he intends to describe; passes through them with as much inattention as his valet de chambre; and consequently not having a fund himself to fill a volume, he applies to those who wrote before him, and gives us the manners of a country, not as he must have seen them, but such as they might have been fifty years before. The modern Dutchman is quite a different creature from him of former times: he in every thing imitates a Frenchman, but in his easy disengaged air, which is the result of keeping polite company. The Dutchman is vastly ceremonious, and is perhaps exactly what a Frenchman might have been in the reign of Louis XIV. Such are the better-bred. But the downright Hollander is one of the oddest figures in nature: upon a head of lank hair he wears a half-cocked narrow hat, laced with black ribbon: no coat, but seven waistcoats, and nine pair of breeches; so that his hips reach almost up to his arm-pits. This well-clothed vegetable is now fit to see company, or make love. But what a pleasing creature is the object of his appetite! Why, she wears a large fur cap with a deal of Flanders lace: and for every pair of breeches he carries, she puts on two petticoats.

A Dutch lady burns nothing about her phlegmatic admirer but his tobacco. You must know, Sir, every woman carries in her hand a stove with coals in it, which, when she sits, she snugs under her petticoats; and at this chimney dozing Strephon lights his pipe. I take it that this

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continual smoking is what gives the man the ruddy healthful complexion he generally wears, by draining his superfluous moisture, while the woman, deprived of this amusement, overflows with such viscidities as tint the complexion, and give that paleness of visage which low fenny grounds and moist air conspire to cause. A Dutch woman and Scotch will well bear an opposition. The one is pale and fat, the other lean and ruddy: the one walks as if she were straddling after a go-cart, and the other takes too masculine a stride. I shall not endeavour to deprive either country of its share of beauty; but must say, that, of all objects on this earth, an English farmer's daughter is most charming. Every woman there is a complete beauty, while the higher class of women want many of the requisites to make them even tolerable. Their pleasures here are very dull, though very various. You may smoke, you may doze, you may go to the Italian comedy, as good an amusement as either of the former. This entertainment always brings in Harlequin, who is generally a magician, and in consequence of his diabolical art, performs a thousand tricks on the rest of the persons of the drama, who are all fools. I have seen the pit in a roar of laughter at this humour, when with his sword he touches the glass from which another was drinking. 'Twas not his face they laughed at, for that was masked. They must have seen something vastly queer in the wooden sword, that neither I, nor you, Sir, were you there, could see.

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In winter, when their canals are frozen, every house is forsaken, and all people are on the ice; sleds drawn by horses, and skaiting, are at that time the reigning amusements. They have boats here that slide on the ice, and are driven by the winds. When they spread all their sails, they go more than a mile and a half a minute, and their motion is so rapid the eye can scarcely accompany them. Their ordinary manner of travelling is very cheap and very convenient: they sail in covered boats drawn by horses; and in these you are sure to meet people of all nations. Here the Dutch slumber, the French chatter, and the English play at cards. Any man who likes company may have them to his taste. For my part, I generally detached myself from all society, and was wholly taken up in observing the face of the country. Nothing can equal its beauty: wherever I turn my eye, fine houses, elegant gardens, statues, grottos, vistas, presented themselves; but when you enter their towns, you are charmed beyond description. No misery is to be seen here; every one is usefully employed.

Scotland and this country bear the highest contrast. There hills and rocks intercept every prospect; here 'tis all a continued plain. There you might see a well-dressed duchess issuing from a dirty close *; and here a dirty Dutchman inhabiting a palace. The Scotch may be compared to a

* The narrow streets or lanes in Edinburgh are called Closes.

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tulip planted in dung; but I never see a Dutchman in his own house, but I think of a magnificent Egyptian temple dedicated to an ox. Physic is by no means taught here so well as in Edinburgh: and in all Leyden there are but four British students, owing to all necessaries being so extremely dear, and the professors so very lazy (the chemical professor excepted), that we don't much care to come hither. I am not certain how long my stay here may be: however I expect to have the happiness of seeing you at Kilmore, if I can, next March.

Direct to me, if I am honoured with a letter from you, to Madame Diallion's, at Leyden.

Thou best of men, may Heaven guard and preserve you, and those you love!

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

In Leyden, where he resided about a year, he studied chemistry under Gaubius, and anatomy under Albinus; but, with the exception of the former, he has given in his letter to his uncle but an unfavourable account of the other professors. It should however be observed, that both this account and his character of the inhabitants in general, seem to have been hastily written, and too soon hazarded after his arrival in Holland, to deserve to be considered as very exact. They are rather good-humoured attempts to divert his friends in Ireland, than the result of mature observation and reflection.

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At Leyden he suffered all the vicissitudes of fortune at play, to which he was now unhappily addicted. One morning he came to a fellow-student* with his pockets literally full of money, and with exultation counted out to him a large sum, which he had won the preceding evening. His friend earnestly pressed him to play no more, but to secure his present gains as a fund for completing his medical studies. Oliver, who could always see what was right though he could not always pursue it, highly approved this advice, and declared his firm resolution to make it the rule of his future conduct. But the seductions of the gaming-table were irresistible, and he was soon after stripped of every shilling. In this exigence he received pecuniary assistance from the gentleman above-mentioned, with which he determined to quit Holland and to visit the adjacent countries. But, unfortunately, his curiosity led him to view a garden where the choicest flowers were reared for sale, and it is well known to what a height of extravagance the Dutch florists have raised the price of these beautiful productions of nature when improved by art. Poor Goldsmith, recollecting that his uncle was an admirer of such rarities, without reflecting on the reduced state of his own finances, was tempted to purchase some of these costly flower-roots to be sent as a present to Ireland, and thereby left himself so little cash, that he is

* The late Dr. Ellis, clerk of the Irish House of Commons, from whom the following anecdotes are related.

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said to have set out on his travels with only one clean shirt, and no money in his pocket.

He resolved to make the tour of Europe on foot, and to trust to Providence for his resources. He has observed in his "Enquiry into the present State of Polite Literature in Europe," chap. XIII. that "Countries wear very different appearances "to travellers of different circumstances. A man "who is whirled through Europe in his post-"chaise, and the pilgrim who walks the grand "tour on foot, will form very different conclusions "—*Haud inexpertus loquor**."

He was accustomed to give an account of his own travels so nearly resembling those of the wanderer in his "Vicar of Wakefield," that some of the following particulars are believed to belong to himself. "I had some knowledge of music, and "now turned what was once my amusement, into "a present means of subsistence. Whenever I "approached a peasant's house towards night-fall, "I played one of my most merry tunes, and that "procured me not only a lodging but subsistence "for the next day. I once or twice attempted to "play to people of fashion, but they always thought "my performance odious, and never rewarded me "even with a trifle."

His classical learning procured him also entertainment at the monasteries, especially those of the

* This last clause he omitted in his second edition.

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Irish nation. And in some of the foreign universities and convents, upon certain days theses are maintained against any adventitious disputant; for which, if the champion opposes with some dexterity, he may claim a gratuity in money, a dinner, and a bed for the night. This afforded another resource for our forlorn pilgrim. "Thus," says he, "I fought my way from convent to convent, "walked from city to city, examined mankind "more nearly, and, if I may so express it, saw both "sides of the picture."

In this manner he travelled through Flanders and some parts of France and Germany, till he arrived at Switzerland, where he first cultivated his poetical talents with success; for in his dedication of the "Traveller" to his brother Henry, we are told that part of that delightful poem was written there. The golden mediocrity, which inhabits those rugged mountains, appears to have been most congenial to his feelings at that time; when seeking shelter under the peasant's thatched but hospitable roof, he became at once their favourite and that of the Muses. Hence it was, that, descending to Italy, he made his description of that country so much more vigorous and picturesque than that of Addison; though they both viewed it through pretty much the same political opticks.

It has been related by former biographers, that at Geneva Goldsmith was engaged to be travelling tutor, or companion, to a young Englishman, who

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having been bred an attorney, had fallen into possession of a large fortune devolved to him from his uncle, a pawnbroker in London, and now resolved to improve himself by travel, but that through the sordid avarice of the pupil the tutor was soon released from his charge. But it has, however, been doubted by his intimate friends, whether this connection has not rather been imagined from the adventure in the novel, than really experienced by himself.

He then went to Padua in Italy, where he staid six months; and if he ever took any medical degree it was probably in this ancient school of medicine*. Of Italy he visited all the northern part, and saw Venice, Verona, and Florence. But losing his good uncle and generous benefactor while he was in Italy, he was obliged to travel through France to England, as heretofore, on foot; still lodging in convents, wherever he could find any of his own nation. He landed at Dover about the breaking out of the war in 1756. Such is the account he used to give of this peregrination, in which he spent about a year.

When he had crossed the sea he had still to

* However, a former biographer says, "He took the degree of Bachelor of Physic at Louvain." (Life of Dr. O. Goldsmith, printed for Swan, 1774. 8vo.)

In February 1769, Dr. Goldsmith made an excursion to Oxford with Dr. Johnson, and was admitted in that celebrated university *ad eundem gradum*, which he said was that of M. B. See also his agreement with the bookseller below.

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stem the tide of adversity: for in England he found neither his German flute, nor his skill in disputation, would procure him a supper, and he arrived in London in the extremity of distress. He tried to be admitted an assistant in a school or academy, but even found that humble station at first difficult to obtain, for want of a recommendation or testimonial. Oliver, relying on his talents, hoped at some future period to emerge from this obscurity; and, unwilling that these his inferior struggles should be afterwards remembered, made his application under a feigned name; and, when he was required to refer the master of the school to some respectable person for a character, he was in no small difficulty. In this exigence, he wrote to Dr. Radcliff, a mild and benevolent man, who had been joint tutor with his persecutor Wilder, in Trinity College, and had sometimes lectured the other's pupils. He explained to him his situation, and told him that the same post which conveyed this information, would bring him another letter of inquiry from the schoolmaster, to which he intreated the Doctor to return an answer. With this request he readily complied, and in a subsequent letter he received a very entertaining account of our poet's travels and adventures *.

How long he retained this usher's place is not known; but that he had deeply experienced the

* So we are told by Dr. Campbell, in his "Philosophical Survey of the South of Ireland."

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miseries of such a situation, might be collected not only from the passages he has thrown into the mouth of his philosophical wanderer in "The Vicar of Wakefield," but from the very feeling manner in which he would thus describe them in conversation:

"After all the fatigues of the day, the poor usher of an academy is obliged to sleep in the same bed with a Frenchman, a teacher of that language to the boys; who disturbs him every night an hour perhaps in papering and filletting his hair, and stinks worse than a carrion, with his rancid pomatums, when he lays his head beside him on his bolster."

Subsequent to his attempt as an usher, his want of present subsistence induced him to apply to several apothecaries to be admitted a journeyman: but his threadbare coat, his uncouth figure, and Hibernian dialect, caused him to meet with repeated refusals; till at length a chemist, moved by his forlorn condition, and perhaps surprised at his medical knowledge, is said to have taken him into his laboratory, where he became an useful assistant. He was in this situation when he found out that Dr. Sleigh, an old fellow-student of his at Edinburgh, was then in London; by whom Goldsmith was affectionately received, and liberally invited to share his purse.

Thus assisted, he had recourse to his original profession of Physic; and the Bankside in Southwark was the first seat of his medical practice; whence he afterwards removed to the Temple, or its

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neighbourhood. In either place his success as a physician is not known, and his pecuniary emoluments were but small; for he used to confess, that although he had plenty of patients, he got no fees.

But now he had leisure to have recourse to his pen, and the merit of his literary compositions soon supplied the defects of medical practice.

We have obtained the following account of him at this period from another very respectable physician, to whom he was much attached when he was at college at Edinburgh.

"From the time of Goldsmith's leaving Edinburgh in the year 1754, I never saw him till the year 1756, when I was in London attending the hospitals and lectures. Early in January he called upon me one morning before I was up; and on my entering the room, I recognised my old acquaintance dressed in a rusty full-trimmed black suit, with his pockets full of papers, which instantly reminded me of the poet in Garrick's farce of Lethe. After we had finished our breakfast, he drew from his pocket part of a tragedy, which he said he had brought for my correction; in vain I pleaded inability when he began to read, and every part on which I expressed a doubt as to the propriety, was immediately blotted out. I then more earnestly pressed him not to trust to my judgment, but to the opinion of persons better qualified to decide on dramatic compositions; on which he told me that he had submitted his production, so far as he had

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written, to Mr. Richardson, the author of Clarissa; on which I peremptorily declined offering another criticism on the performance. The name and subject of the tragedy have unfortunately escaped my memory; neither do I recollect with exactness how much he had written, though I am inclined to believe that he had not completed the third act; I never heard whether he afterwards finished it. In this visit I remember his relating a strange Quixotic scheme he had in contemplation, of going to decypher the inscriptions on the *Written Mountains*, though he was altogether ignorant of Arabic, or the language in which they might be supposed to be written. The salary of 300*l.* per annum which had been left for the purpose was the temptation!"

That his exertions in literature and medicine contributed at this time to his support, is evident from the following letter, addressed to the gentleman who had married his eldest sister.

TO

DANIEL HODSON, ESQ.

AT LISHOY, NEAR BALLYMAHON, IRELAND.

DEAR SIR,

It may be four years since my last letters went to Ireland, and to you in particular; I received no answer, probably because you never wrote to me. My brother Charles, however, informs me of

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the fatigue you were at in soliciting a subscription to assist me, not only among my friends and relations, but acquaintance in general. Though my pride might feel some repugnance at being thus relieved, yet my gratitude can suffer no diminution. How much am I obliged to you, to them, for such generosity, or (why should not your virtues have the proper name?) for such charity to me at that juncture. Sure I am born to ill fortune, to be so much a debtor and unable to repay. But to say no more of this — too many professions of gratitude are often considered as indirect petitions for future favours; let me only add, that my not receiving that supply was the cause of my present establishment at London. You may easily imagine what difficulties I had to encounter, left as I was without friends, recommendations, money, or impudence; and that in a country where being born an Irishman was sufficient to keep me unemployed. Many in such circumstances would have had recourse to the friar's cord, or the suicide's halter. But, with all my follies, I had principle to resist the one, and resolution to combat the other.

I suppose you desire to know my present situation. As there is nothing in it at which I should blush, or which mankind could censure, I see no reason for making it a secret; in short, by a very little practice as a physician, and a very little reputation as a poet, I make a shift to live. Nothing is more apt to introduce us to the gates of the Muses

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than Poverty; but it were well if they only left us at the door; the mischief is, they sometimes choose to give us their company at the entertainment, and Want, instead of being gentleman-usher, often turns master of the ceremonies. Thus, upon hearing I write, no doubt you imagine I starve; and the name of an author naturally reminds you of a garret. In this particular I do not think proper to undeceive my friends. But whether I eat or starve, live in a first floor or four pair of stairs high, I still remember them with ardour; nay my very country comes in for a share of my affection. Unaccountable fondness for country, this *Maladie du Pais*, as the French call it! Unaccountable that he should still have an affection for a place, who never received when in it above common civility; who never brought any thing out of it except his brogue and his blunders. Surely my affection is equally ridiculous with the Scotchman's, who refused to be cured of the itch, because it made him unco' thoughtful of his wife and bonny Inverary. But now to be serious, let me ask myself what gives me a wish to see Ireland again? The country is a fine one perhaps? No.—There is good company in Ireland? No. The conversation there is generally made up of a smutty toast, or a bawdy song; the vivacity supported by some humble cousin, who has just folly enough to earn his dinner.—Then perhaps there's more wit and learning among the Irish? Oh, lord! no. There

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has been more money spent in the encouragement of the Podareen mare there one season, than given in rewards to learned men since the times of Usher. All their productions in learning amount to perhaps a translation, or a few tracts in divinity; and all their productions in wit to just nothing at all.—Why the plague then so fond of Ireland? Then all at once, because you, my dear friend, and a few more, who are exceptions to the general picture, have a residence there. This it is that gives me all the pangs I feel in separation. I confess I carry this spirit sometimes to the souring the pleasures I at present possess. If I go to the opera where Signora Columba pours out all the mazes of melody, I sit and sigh for Lishoy fireside, and Johnny Armstrong's Last Good Night from Peggy Golden. If I climb Flamstead hill, than where nature never exhibited a more magnificent prospect, I confess it fine; but then I had rather be placed on the little mount before Lishoy gate, and there take in, to me, the most pleasing horizon in nature. Before Charles came hither, my thoughts sometimes found refuge from severer studies among my friends in Ireland. I fancied strange revolutions at home; but I find it was the rapidity of my own motion, that gave an imaginary one to objects really at rest. No alterations there. Some friends, he tells me, are still lean, but very rich: others very fat, but still very poor. Nay, all the news I hear from you is, that you sally out in visits among

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the neighbours, and sometimes make a migration from the blue bed to the brown. I could from my heart wish that you, and she, and Lishoy, and Ballymahon, and all of you, would fairly make a migration into Middlesex: though upon second thoughts this might be attended with a few inconveniences: therefore, as the mountain will not come to Mahomet, why Mahomet shall go to the mountain: or to speak plain English, as you cannot conveniently pay me a visit, if next summer I can contrive to be absent six weeks from London, I shall spend three of them among my friends in Ireland. But first, believe me, my design is purely to visit, and neither to cut a figure nor levy contributions, neither to excite envy nor solicit favour: in fact, my circumstances are adapted to neither. I am too poor to be gazed at, and too rich to need assistance.

You see, dear Dan, how long I have been talking about myself; but attribute my vanity to my affection: as every man is fond of himself, and I consider you as a second self, I imagine you will consequently be pleased with these instances of egotism.

[*Some mention of private family affairs is here omitted.*]

My dear Sir, these things give me real uneasiness, and I could wish to redress them. But at present there is hardly a kingdom in Europe, in

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which I am not a debtor. I have already discharged my most threatening and pressing demands, for we must be just before we can be grateful. For the rest, I need not say (you know I am),

Your affectionate kinsman,

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

Temple Exchange Coffee-house, near Temple-bar,
Where you may direct an answer.
December 27, 1757.

While he was thus endeavouring to support himself between his prescriptions and his pen, he renewed his acquaintance with several of the young physicians whom he had known at Edinburgh. Among these was a son of the Rev. Dr. Milner, a dissenting minister, who kept a classical school at Peckham, in Surrey, of considerable eminence. Observing Dr. Goldsmith's distressed situation, he invited him to take the charge of his father's school, while he was confined by a long illness, which at length proved fatal; and in return his father, who had considerable interest with several of the India Directors, promised to exert it in procuring for him some medical establishment under the East India Company. This he faithfully performed, through the favour of Mr. Jones, one of the Directors; and Dr. Goldsmith had a regular appointment to be physician to one of the factories in India, in the year 1758.

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To prepare for his equipment he drew up proposals to print, by subscriptions of five shillings, his intended publication of "The Present State of Polite Literature in Europe." These he transmitted to his friends in Ireland; and that subscription, together with an account of his present situation and future prospects, are the subjects of the following letters.

The first and last being addressed to his nearest relatives, are perhaps hastily and carelessly written; but that to Mr. Mills is in the finest style of elegant and delicate epistolary composition.

TO

DANIEL HODSON, ESQ.

AT LISHOY, NEAR BALLYMAHON, IRELAND.

[*No date, but written in the Summer of* 1758.]

DEAR SIR,

You cannot expect regularity in one who is regular in nothing. Nay, were I forced to love you by rule, I dare venture to say I could never do it sincerely. Take me then with all my faults. Let me write when I please; for you see I say what I please, and am only thinking aloud when writing to you. I suppose you have heard of my intention of going to the East Indies. The place of my destination is one of the factories on the coast of Coromandel; and I go in quality of

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physician and surgeon; for which the Company has signed my warrant, which has already cost me ten pounds. I must also pay 50*l.* for my passage, and ten pounds for my sea stores; and the other incidental expenses of my equipment will amount to 60 or 70*l.* more. The salary is but trifling, viz. 100*l.* per ann. but the other advantages, if a person be prudent, are considerable. The practice of the place, if I am rightly informed, generally amounts to not less than one thousand pounds per ann. for which the appointed physician has an exclusive privilege. This, with the advantages resulting from trade, with the high interest which money bears, viz. 20*l.* per cent. are the inducements which persuade me to undergo the fatigues of sea, the dangers of war, and the still greater dangers of the climate: which induce me to leave a place where I am every day gaining friends and esteem, and where I might enjoy all the conveniences of life. I am certainly wrong not to be contented with what I already possess, trifling as it is; for should I ask myself one serious question—What is it I want? —what can I answer? My desires are capricious as the big-bellied woman's, who longed for a piece of her husband's nose. I have no certainty, it is true; but why cannot I do as some men of more merit, who have lived on more precarious terms? Scarron used jestingly to call himself the Marquis of Quenault; which was the name of the

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bookseller that employed him: and why may not I assert my privilege and quality on the same pretensions? Yet, upon deliberation, whatever airs I give myself on this side of the water, my dignity, I fancy, would be evaporated before I reached the other. I know you have in Ireland a very indifferent idea of a man who writes for bread; though Swift and Steele did so in the earliest part of their lives. You imagine, I suppose, that every author by profession lives in a garret, wears shabby clothes, and converses with the meanest company. Yet I do not believe there is one single writer, who has abilities to translate a French novel, that does not keep better company, wear finer clothes, and live more genteelly, than many who pride themselves for nothing else in Ireland. I confess it again, my dear Dan, that nothing but the wildest ambition could prevail on me to leave the enjoyment of that refined conversation which I am sometimes admitted to partake in, for uncertain fortune, and paltry shew. You cannot conceive how I am sometimes divided: to leave all that is dear to me gives me pain; but when I consider I may possibly acquire a genteel independence for life: when I think of that dignity which philosophy claims, to raise itself above contempt and ridicule: when I think thus, I eagerly long to embrace every opportunity of separating myself from the vulgar, as much in my circumstances, as I am already in my sentiments.

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I am going to publish a book, for an account of which I refer you to a letter which I wrote to my brother Goldsmith. Circulate for me among your acquaintance a hundred proposals, which I have given orders may be sent to you: and if, in pursuance of such circulation, you should receive any subscriptions, let them, when collected, be transmitted to Mr. Bradley, who will give a receipt for the same.

[*Omitting here what relates to private family affairs, he then adds:*]

I know not how my desire of seeing Ireland, which had so long slept, has again revived with so much ardour. So weak is my temper, and so unsteady, that I am frequently tempted, particularly when low-spirited, to return home and leave my fortune, though just beginning to look kinder. But it shall not be. In five or six years I hope to indulge these transports. I find I want constitution, and a strong steady disposition, which alone makes men great. I will however correct my faults, since I am conscious of them.

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TO EDWARD MILLS, ESQ.

NEAR ROSCOMMON, IRELAND.

DEAR SIR,

You have quitted, I find, that plan of life which you once intended to pursue; and given up ambition for domestic tranquillity. Were I to consult your satisfaction alone in this change, I have the utmost reason to congratulate your choice; but when I consider my own, I cannot avoid feeling some regret, that one of my few friends has declined a pursuit, in which he had every reason to expect success. The truth is, like the rest of the world, I am self-interested in my concern; and do not so much consider the happiness you have acquired, as the honour I have probably lost in the change. I have often let my fancy loose when you were the subject, and have imagined you gracing the bench, or thundering at the bar; while I have taken no small pride to myself, and whispered all that I could come near, that this was my cousin. Instead of this, it seems, you are contented to be merely an happy man; to be esteemed only by your acquaintance—to cultivate your paternal acres—to take unmolested a nap under one of your own hawthorns, or in Mrs. Mills' bed-chamber, which, even a poet must confess, is rather the most comfortable place of the two.

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But, however your resolutions may be altered with respect to your situation in life, I persuade myself they are unalterable with regard to your friends in it. I cannot think the world has taken such entire possession of that heart, (once so susceptible of friendship,) as not to have left a corner there for a friend or two; but I flatter myself that even I have my place among the number. This I have a claim to from the similitude of our dispositions; or, setting that aside, I can demand it as my right by the most equitable law in nature, I mean that of retaliation: for indeed you have more than your share in mine. I am a man of few professions, and yet this very instant I cannot avoid the painful apprehension, that my present professions (which speak not half my feelings) should be considered only as a pretext to cover a request, as I have a request to make. No, my dear Ned, I know you are too generous to think so; and you know me too proud to stoop to mercenary insincerity. I have a request, it is true, to make; but, as I know to whom I am a petitioner, I make it without diffidence or confusion. It is in short this, I am going to publish a book in London, entitled "An Essay on the present State of Taste and Literature in Europe." Every work published here the printers in Ireland republish there, without giving the author the least consideration for his copy. I would in this respect disappoint their avarice, and have all the additional advantages that may result

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from the sale of my performance there to myself. The book is now printing in London, and I have requested Dr. Radcliff, Mr. Lawder, Mr. Bryanton, my brother Mr. Henry Goldsmith, and brother-in-law Mr. Hodson, to circulate my proposals among their acquaintance. The same request I now make to you, and have accordingly given directions to Mr. Bradley, bookseller in Dame-street, Dublin, to send you a hundred proposals. Whatever subscriptions, pursuant to those proposals, you may receive, when collected, may be transmitted to Mr. Bradley, who will give a receipt for the money, and be accountable for the books. I shall not, by a paltry apology, excuse myself for putting you to this trouble. Were I not convinced that you found more pleasure in doing good-natured things, than uneasiness at being employed in them, I should not have singled you out on this occasion. It is probable you would comply with such a request, if it tended to the encouragement of any man of learning whatsoever; what then may not he expect who has claims of family and friendship to enforce his

I am, dear Sir, your sincere
Friend and humble servant,
OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

London, Temple Exchange Coffee-house,
Temple-bar, August 7, 1759.

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TO THE

REV. HENRY GOLDSMITH,

AT LOWFIELD, NEAR BALLYMORE, IN WEST-MEATH, IRELAND.

[This is evidently a second letter, subsequent to all the preceding, and written about the year 1759.]

DEAR SIR,

YOUR punctuality in answering a man whose trade is writing, is more than I had reason to expect; and yet you see me generally fill a whole sheet, which is all the recompense I can make for being so frequently troublesome. The behaviour of Mr. Mills and Mr. Lawder is a little extraordinary. However, their answering neither you nor me is a sufficient indication of their disliking the employment which I assigned them. As their conduct is different from what I had expected, so I have made an alteration in mine. I shall the beginning of next month send over two hundred and fifty books*, which are all that I fancy can be well sold among you; and I would have you make some distinction in the persons who have subscribed. The money, which will amount to sixty pounds, may be left with Mr. Bradley,

* His book on "The present State of Polite Literature in Europe;" subscription price, 5s.

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as soon as possible. I am not certain but I shall quickly have occasion for it. I have met with no disappointment with respect to my East India voyage; nor are my resolutions altered; though at the same time I must confess, it gives me some pain to think I am almost beginning the world at the age of thirty-one. Though I never had a day's sickness since I saw you, yet I am not that strong active man you once knew me. You scarcely can conceive how much eight years of disappointment, anguish, and study, have worn me down. If I remember right, you are seven or eight years older than me, yet I dare venture to say, that if a stranger saw us both, he would pay me the honours of seniority. Imagine to yourself a pale melancholy visage, with two great wrinkles between the eye-brows, with an eye disgustingly severe, and a big wig; and you may have a perfect picture of my present appearance. On the other hand, I conceive you as perfectly sleek and healthy, passing many a happy day among your own children, or those who knew you a child. Since I knew what it was to be a man, this is a pleasure I have not known. I have passed my days among a parcel of cool designing beings, and have contracted all their suspicious manner in my own behaviour*. I should actually be as unfit

* This is all *gratis dictum*, for there never was a character so unsuspicious and so unguarded as the writer's.

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for the society of my friends at home, as I detest that which I am obliged to partake of here. I can now neither partake of the pleasure of a revel, nor contribute to raise its jollity. I can neither laugh nor drink, have contracted an hesitating disagreeable manner of speaking, and a visage that looks ill-nature itself; in short, I have thought myself into a settled melancholy, and an utter disgust of all that life brings with it—Whence this romantic turn, that all our family are possessed with? Whence this love for every place and every country but that in which we reside? for every occupation but our own? this desire of fortune, and yet this eagerness to dissipate? I perceive, my dear Sir, that I am at intervals for indulging this splenetic manner, and following my own taste, regardless of yours.

The reasons you have given me for breeding up your son a scholar are judicious and convincing; I should however be glad to know for what particular profession he is designed. If he be assiduous, and divested of strong passions (for passions in youth always lead to pleasure), he may do very well in your college; for it must be owned, that the industrious poor have good encouragement there, perhaps better than in any other in Europe. But if he has ambition, strong passions, and an exquisite sensibility of contempt, do not send him there, unless you have no other trade for him except your own. It is impossible to conceive how much may be done

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by a proper education at home. A boy, for instance, who understands perfectly well Latin, French, Arithmetic, and the principles of the Civil Law, and can write a fine hand, has an education that may qualify him for any undertaking. And these parts of learning should be carefully inculcated, let him be designed for whatever calling he will. Above all things let him never touch a romance or novel; those paint beauty in colours more charming than nature; and describe happiness that man never tastes. How delusive, how destructive are those pictures of consummate bliss! They teach the youthful mind to sigh after beauty and happiness which never existed; to despise the little good which fortune has mixed in our cup, by expecting more than she ever gave; and in general, take the word of a man who has seen the world, and has studied human nature more by experience than precept—take my word for it, I say, that books teach us very little of the world. The greatest merit in a state of poverty would only serve to make the possessor ridiculous; may distress, but cannot relieve him. Frugality, and even avarice, in the lower orders of mankind, are true ambition. These afford the only ladder for the poor to rise to preferment. Teach then, my dear Sir, to your son thrift and economy. Let his poor wandering uncle's example be placed before his eyes. I had learned from books to be disinterested and generous, before I was taught from experience the necessity of being

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prudent. I had contracted the habits and notions of a philosopher, while I was exposing myself to the insidious approaches of cunning; and often by being, even with my narrow finances, charitable to excess, I forgot the rules of justice, and placed myself in the very situation of the wretch who thanked me for my bounty. When I am in the remotest part of the world, tell him this, and perhaps he may improve from my example. But I find myself again falling into my gloomy habits of thinking.

My mother, I am informed, is almost blind; even though I had the utmost inclination to return home, under such circumstances I could not: for to behold her in distress without a capacity of relieving her from it, would add too much to my splenetic habit. Your last letter was much too short, it should have answered some queries I had made in my former. Just sit down as I do, and write forward till you have filled all your paper; it requires no thought, at least from the ease with which my own sentiments rise when they are addressed to you. For, believe me, my head has no share in all I write; my heart dictates the whole. Pray, give my love to Bob Bryanton, and intreat him, from me, not to drink. My dear Sir, give me some account about poor Jenny*. Yet her husband loves her; if so, she cannot be unhappy.

I know not whether I should tell you—yet why

* His youngest sister, who had married unfortunately.

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should I conceal those trifles, or indeed any thing from you?—there is a book of mine will be published in a few days, the Life of a very extraordinary man—no less than the great Voltaire. You know already by the title, that it is no more than a catch-penny*. However, I spent but four weeks on the whole performance, for which I received twenty pounds. When published, I shall take some method of conveying it to you, unless you may think it dear of the postage, which may amount to four or five shillings. However I fear you will not find an equivalence of amusement. Your last letter, I repeat it, was too short; you should have given me your opinion of the design of the heroi-comical poem which I sent you: you remember I intended to introduce the hero of the poem, as lying in a paltry alehouse. You may take the following specimen of the manner, which I flatter myself is quite original. The room in which he lies, may be described somewhat this way:—

The window, patch'd with paper, lent a ray,
That feebly shew'd the state in which he lay.
The sanded floor, that grits beneath the tread:
The humid wall with paltry pictures spread;
The game of goose was there exposed to view,
And the twelve rules the royal martyr drew:

* This account of the performance by the author, will appear a sufficient reason for its not being introduced into the present edition of his works.

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The seasons framed with listing, found a place,
And Prussia's monarch shew'd his lamp-black face.
The morn was cold; he views with keen desire
A rusty grate unconscious of a fire.
An unpaid reckoning on the frieze was scored,
And five crack'd tea-cups dress'd the chimney board.

And now imagine, after his soliloquy, the landlord to make his appearance, in order to dun him for the reckoning:—

Not with that face, so servile and so gay,
That welcomes every stranger that can pay;
With sulky eye he smoked the patient man,
Then pull'd his breeches tight, and thus began, &c.

All this is taken, you see, from nature. It is a good remark of Montaigne's, that the wisest men often have friends, with whom they do not care how much they play the fool. Take my present follies as instances of regard. Poetry is a much easier, and more agreeable species of composition than prose; and could a man live by it, it were not unpleasant employment to be a poet. I am resolved to leave no space, though I should fill it up only by telling you, what you very well know already —I mean that I am,

Your most affectionate
Friend and brother,
OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

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When this last letter was written, Dr. Goldsmith appears to have grown cooler in his desire for an East India voyage; and, if it was written within a month of the expected publication of the book therein mentioned, he had certainly given up that design for the present, though his general resolutions to travel to Asia remained still unaltered, as we shall see hereafter. For, sometime in the year 1758, he happened to dine at Dr. Milner's table, in company with Mr. Griffiths, the publisher and proprietor of the Monthly Review, who invited him to become a writer in that literary journal, and offered him such terms as he deemed deserving his acceptance. These were, his board, lodging, and a handsome salary.

These terms were stipulated in a written agreement, which was to last for one year; and in fulfilling his part of it, Dr. Goldsmith declared he usually wrote for his employer every day from nine o'clock till two. But at the end of seven or eight months it was dissolved by mutual consent, and our poet took lodgings in Green Arbour-court, in the Old Bailey, where he completed his "Enquiry into the present State of Polite Literature in Europe," printed for Dodsley, 1759, 12mo.

He had removed thither early in that year: for a friend of his paying him a visit at the beginning of March 1759, found him in lodgings there so poor and uncomfortable, that he should not think it proper to mention the circumstance, if he did not

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consider it as the highest proof of the splendour of Dr. Goldsmith's genius and talents, that by the bare exertion of their powers, under every disadvantage of person and fortune, he could gradually emerge from such obscurity to the enjoyment of all the comforts and even luxuries of life, and admission into the best societies in London.

The Doctor was writing his Enquiry, &c. in a wretched dirty room, in which there was but one chair, and when he, from civility, offered it to his visitant, himself was obliged to sit in the window. While they were conversing, some one gently rapped at the door, and being desired to come in, a poor ragged little girl, of very decent behaviour, entered, who, dropping a courtesy, said, "My mamma sends her compliments, and begs the favour of you to lend her a chamber-pot full of coals."

He afterwards removed to very decent lodgings in Wine-office-court, Fleet-street, where he wrote his "Vicar of Wakefield," attended with the affecting circumstance of his being under arrest. When the knowledge of his situation was communicated to Johnson, he disposed of his manuscript for sixty pounds, to Mr. Newbery the bookseller, and procured his enlargement. Although the money was then paid, the book was not published till some time after, when his fine poem "The Traveller" had established his fame*.

* See an interesting account of this circumstance in Boswell's Life of Johnson, vol. I. p. 373.

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Dr. Goldsmith, speaking to his medical friend, to whom we have before alluded, and by whose communications we have been greatly obliged, asked him his opinion of this fascinating performance. "I spoke of it," said his friend, "in the warm terms I thought it deserved, pointing out however certain parts which I wished, had he had more time for the purpose, had been altered or corrected*. Goldsmith concurred with me in my remarks, but added that it was not from want of time it had not been done, as Newbery kept it by him in manuscript two years before he published it; 'he gave me,' I think he said, '60*l.* for the copy, and had I made it ever so perfect or correct, I should not have had a shilling more.'"

When he first took up his residence in that court, our author was not personally acquainted with Johnson; and the first visit he ever received from that distinguished writer, was on May 31st, 1761, when he gave an invitation to him, and much other company, many of them literary men, to a supper in these lodgings.

One of the company then invited†, being intimate with our great Lexicographer, was desired to call upon him and take him with him. As they went together, the former was much struck with

* See Boswell, vol. III. p. 401, where will be found a curious account of two fine passages, originally inserted in this novel, afterwards struck out by the author.

† Dr. Percy, afterwards Bishop of Dromore.

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the studied neatness of Johnson's dress: he had on a new suit of clothes, a new wig nicely powdered, and every thing about him so perfectly dissimilar from his usual habits and appearance, that his companion could not help inquiring the cause of this singular transformation. "Why, Sir," said Johnson, "I hear that Goldsmith, who is a very great sloven, justifies his disregard of cleanliness and decency by quoting my practice, and I am desirous this night to shew him a better example."

In the spring of the year 1763, Dr. Goldsmith had lodgings at Canonbury-house, in Islington; and having, from the time of his emancipation above mentioned, been much connected with Mr. Newbery, a very liberal and worthy man, he corrected and revised many of his publications, particularly his "Art of Poetry," in two volumes, 12mo, and a "Life of Beau Nash," in 8vo. written soon after the death of that king of Bath. Here also he wrote his "Letters on English History," in two volumes, 12mo, in the assumed character of a nobleman to his son; which have been attributed to Lord Lyttelton, the Earl of Orrery, and other noble authors, but were really written by Dr. Goldsmith.

But the production which he meant should establish his fame, and on which he bestowed his choicest hours, was his admirable poem "The Traveller," first printed in 1765. While he was composing this with the greatest care, and finishing it in his highest and best manner, he scribbled with all possible

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despatch some of the above, and other slight publications, for his present subsistence. The life of an author militant is attended with this peculiar circumstance, that he cannot eat his daily bread until he has performed some daily task to procure it. So that for several years, when Goldsmith was composing his most valuable works, in which he displayed the whole powers of his mind, he was at the same time engaged in many inferior publications for immediate support. Thus while he was writing his Enquiry, &c. for Dodsley, he conducted for Wilkie the bookseller a Lady's Magazine, and joined with some literary associates in a miscellaneous publication, called "The Bee, being Essays on the most interesting subjects," printed for Wilkie, 1759, small 8vo. These first appeared in weekly numbers.

But his best production of this kind was a series of letters in the character of a Chinese philosopher, originally published in a periodical paper called The Ledger, and collected into two volumes 12mo, printed for Newbery, 1762, entitled "The Citizen of the World." This collection has considerable merit, as every paper in it is distinguished by a display of judgment, wit, or humour.

A selection of his best fugitive pieces, containing also papers from these publications, was afterwards given to the world under the title of "Essays," 1765, 12mo.

Still his early habits of wandering had possession of his mind, and he had not given up his desire of

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penetrating into the internal parts of Asia. This desire revived, when, soon after the accession of his present Majesty, the Earl of Bute, then prime minister, dispensed in several instances the royal bounty in pensions and benefactions to men of genius and eminence in literature, a circumstance which ought ever to be remembered to his honour. To Lord Bute Goldsmith made an application to be allowed a salary, to enable him to execute his favourite plan: and to prepare the way for its success, he drew up that ingenious essay on this subject which was first printed in the Ledger, and afterwards in his "Citizen of the World;" wherein the expediency and advantages of such a mission are eloquently stated, and urged by a great variety of topics. But poor Goldsmith, who had not then published his "Traveller," or distinguished his name by any popular display of genius; being obscure and unfriended, was not successful. His petition, or memorial, was unnoticed and neglected *.

But while this inclination was still predominant,

* Of this project we have the following account in Boswell.

"Goldsmith had long a visionary project, that some time or other, when his circumstances should be easier, he would go to Aleppo, in order to acquire a knowledge, as far as might be, of any arts peculiar to the East, and introduce them into Britain. When this was talked of in Johnson's company, he said, 'Of all men Goldsmith is the most unfit to go out upon such an enquiry: for he is utterly ignorant of such arts as we already possess, and consequently could not know what would be accessions to our present stock of mechanical knowledge. Sir, he would bring

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after the application to Lord Bute had failed, an opportunity was thrown in his way of fulfilling his most sanguine expectations. But opportunities he always neglected. His "Traveller" had procured him the unsolicited friendship of Lord Nugent, afterwards Earl of Clare; who mentioned him favourably to the Earl of Northumberland, then lord lieutenant of Ireland.

This nobleman, newly returned from Ireland in 1764, invited our poet to an interview; when, from a ludicrous mistake of his excellency's groom of the chambers for himself, he expended on the latter the complimentary address he had prepared for his master: so that when the lord lieutenant appeared, his embarrassment was so great, that he came away without being able to explain the object of his wishes.

This Earl (afterwards Duke) of Northumberland, often regretted* that he was not then made acquainted with Dr. Goldsmith's plan and desire to explore the internal regions of Asia; for if he had, he declared he would have procured him a sufficient salary on the Irish establishment, and have had it continued to him during his travels. By such appropriation, his lordship (who was chastely continent in his management of the Irish revenue)

home a grinding-barrow, and think that he had furnished a wonderful improvement.'" Life of Johnson, vol. IV. p. 21.

* To Dr. Percy, Bishop of Dromore.

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would have considered himself as discharging his duty to that country, in thus patronizing its literary genius.

Sir John Hawkins, who is always prodigal of his censure, and sparing only of his praise, relates in his Life of Johnson the following anecdote. "Having one day a call to wait on the late Duke, then Earl of Northumberland, I found Goldsmith waiting for an audience in an outer room: I asked him what had brought him there; he told me an invitation from his lordship. I made my business as short as I could, and as a reason mentioned that Dr. Goldsmith was waiting without. The Earl asked me if I was acquainted with him; I told him I was, adding what I thought likely to recommend him. I retired, and staid in the outer room to take him home. Upon his coming out, I asked him the result of his conversation. His lordship, says he, told me he had read my poem, meaning 'The Traveller,' and was much delighted with it; that he was going lord lieutenant to Ireland, and that, hearing that I was a native of that country, he should be glad to do me any kindness.—And what did you answer, asked I, to this gracious offer?—Why, said he, I could say nothing but that I had a brother there, a clergyman, that stood in need of help: as for myself, I have no dependance on the promises of great men; I look to the booksellers for support; they are my best friends, and I am not inclined to forsake them for others."

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Sir John, with an unbecoming asperity, which the occasion neither demanded nor could justify, goes on to say, "Thus did this idiot in the affairs of the world trifle with his fortunes, and put back the hand that was held out to assist him! Other offers of a like kind he either rejected, or failed to improve, contenting himself with the patronage of one nobleman, whose mansion afforded him the delights of a splendid table, and a retreat for a few days from the metropolis."

A benevolent mind would see, in the recommendation of a brother to the notice and kindness of a patron, something to praise; and Dr. Goldsmith's disregard of himself, if not reconcilable with the dictates of prudence, was certainly disinterested.

Our author afterwards became better known to the Duke; and his ballad of "The Hermit" recommended him to the Duchess, who was a most generous encourager and patroness of merit; but not till the opportunity was lost of making their protection subservient to his favourite object, which indeed he himself afterwards laid aside.

This illustrious couple annually paid a visit to Bath; and one year, on their return, the Duchess related with great humour the following diverting occurrence of our eccentric bard: On one of the parades at Bath, the Duke and Lord Nugent had hired two adjacent houses. Dr. Goldsmith, who was then resident on a visit with the latter, one morning walked up into the Duke's

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dining-room, as he and the Duchess were preparing to sit down to breakfast. In a manner the most free and easy he threw himself on a sofa; and, as he was then perfectly known to them both, they inquired of him the Bath news of the day; and, imagining there was some mistake, endeavoured by easy and cheerful conversation to prevent his being too much embarrassed, till breakfast being served up, they invited him to stay and partake of it. Then he awoke from his reverie, declared he thought he had been in the house of his friend Lord Nugent, and with a confusion which may be imagined, hastily withdrew; but not till they had kindly made him promise to dine with them*. This was not, however, till some years after the period to which we have brought his history.

Dr. Goldsmith had in 1764 fixed his abode in the Temple, wherein he ever afterwards resided; first in the library staircase, afterwards in the King's Bench Walk, and ultimately at No. 2, in Brick Court, where he had chambers on the first floor elegantly furnished: and where he was visited by literary friends of the most distinguished merit.

When the club was first proposed and founded by some ingenious men and distinguished writers, which Boswell has denominated the LITERARY CLUB (though it was a title they never assumed themselves), Goldsmith was one of the first mem-

* Communicated by Dr. Percy, Bishop of Dromore, to whom the Duchess related the incident.

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bers: and as the memoirs of this Society inserted by that biographer in his Life of Johnson*, and since by Mr. Malone, in his Account of the Life and Writings of Sir Joshua Reynolds†, will admit of some few corrections, we shall here give a more exact history of it, at least from its establishment to the death of Goldsmith; for which we are indebted to an early member‡.

It was first proposed by Sir Joshua Reynolds to Burke and Johnson, and the first members were the friends of these three.

Although it might be originally designed that the number, when complete, should be twelve; yet for the first three or four years it never exceeded nine or ten. It was intended, that if only two of these chanced to meet for the evening, they should be able to entertain each other.

The first members were, Sir Joshua Reynolds§, Dr. Johnson, Mr. Burke, Dr. Nugent‖, Dr. Goldsmith, Sir John Hawkins, Mr. Langton, Mr. Top-

* Vol. I. p. 433. † Vol. I. p. xlix. 4to.

‡ Dr. Percy, Bishop of Dromore.

§ Neither he nor Sir John Hawkins had then been knighted, nor had Johnson then been presented with the doctorate, but both here, and in other names below, the parties are mentioned by their most usual appellations.

‖ This gentleman was a physician, father of Mr. Burke's wife; not the Dr. Nugent who published Travels to Mechlinburgh, and several philological works, for whom he has been sometimes mistaken. The above Dr. Nugent was a very amiable man, much respected by Dr. Johnson.

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ham Beauclerk, Mr. Chamier, to whom afterwards was added Mr. Dyer*.

They met and supped together every Friday evening at the Turk's Head, in Gerard Street, Soho; and are said by Boswell to have commenced their meetings in 1764, but the gentleman who contributed this account, thinks it was not quite so early.

* This gentleman was an intimate friend of Mr. Burke's, who inserted in the public papers the following character of him at the time of his death, which happened on Monday, Sept. 14, 1772.

"On Monday morning died at his lodgings in Castle Street, Leicester Fields, Samuel Dyer, Esq. fellow of the Royal Society. He was a man of profound and general erudition; and his sagacity and judgment were fully equal to the extent of his learning. His mind was candid, sincere, benevolent: his friendship disinterested and unalterable. The modesty, simplicity, and sweetness of his manners, rendered his conversation as amiable as it was instructive, and endeared him to those few who had the happiness of knowing intimately that valuable unostentatious man, and his death is to them a loss irreparable."

Mr. Dyer was held in high estimation for his erudition by Dr. Johnson, as appears from various passages in Mr. Boswell's entertaining work: but we know not of any literary work in which he was concerned, except that he corrected and improved the Translation of Plutarch's Lives, by Dryden and others, when it was revived by Tonson. An ill-natured, unfounded, and malignant account of this respectable person, having appeared in Sir John Hawkins's Life of Dr. Johnson, the literary world are much indebted to the exertions of Mr. Malone, who has pointed out the errors and misrepresentations of Sir John, and, in placing the character of Mr. Dyer in a proper point of view, has done justice to a learned, virtuous, and amiable man. See Malone's Life of Dryden, p. 181.

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At the beginning of the year 1768, the number of the attending or efficient members was reduced to EIGHT; for Mr. Beauclerk, who had been attracted by more fashionable clubs, had for some time past forsaken this; and Sir John Hawkins, having offended the company by some disrespectful treatment of Burke, sent a letter to excuse his future attendance, as being inconsistent with the early hours adopted in his family.

Upon this the club agreed to elect a supply of new members, and to increase their number to twelve: of which every new member was to be elected by ballot, and one black ball was sufficient for exclusion.

Mr. Beauclerk then desired to be restored to the Society, and the following three new members were introduced on Monday evening, February 15, 1768: Sir Robert Chambers, Dr. Percy, and the late George Colman.

The club continued its regular meetings every Monday evening till December 1772, when it was altered to Friday evening: and two vacancies having been occasioned by deaths, they were supplied on March 12th, 1773, by the Earl of Charlemont and David Garrick. Two other such vacancies occurring soon after, they were filled on April 2d, by Mr. (afterwards Sir William) Jones, and on April 30th by Mr. Boswell, both in 1773. The number was still limited to TWELVE.

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On Friday, March 4th, 1774, three new members were added to the club, viz. the Hon. Charles Fox, Sir Charles Bunbury, and Dr. George Fordyce: and the same evening was elected George Steevens, Esq.

These are believed to be pretty exact annals of the club down to the death of Dr. Goldsmith; but either then, or soon after, the number was increased to thirty; and in 1775, instead of supping once a week, they resolved to dine together once a fortnight during the sitting of Parliament: and now they dine every other Tuesday, at Parsloe's in St. James's Street.

The number has been gradually increased to thirty-five, and is at present limited to forty*.

* The following List is believed to contain the names of all that had been members of this Club in 1797.

Lord Ashburton, (Dunning)
Sir Joseph Banks, K. B.
The Marquis of Bath
Dr. Barnard, Bishop of Limerick
Mr. Topham Beauclerk
Sir Charles Blagden
Mr. Boswell
Sir Charles Bunbury
Rt. Hon. Edmund Burke
Richard Burke, (his son)
Dr. Burney
Sir Robert Chambers
Mr. Chamier
The Earl of Charlemont
George Colman
Mr. Courtney
Dr. Douglas, Bishop of Salisbury
Mr. Dyer
Lord Elliot
Rev. Dr. Farmer
Dr. George Fordyce
Rt. Hon. Charles Fox
David Garrick, Esq.
Mr. Gibbon
Dr. Goldsmith
Sir Wm. Hamilton, K. B.
Sir John Hawkins
Dr. Hinchliffe, Bishop of Peterborough

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In the year 1765, Dr. Goldsmith printed his beautiful ballad of "The HERMIT;" which he at first inscribed to the Countess of Northumberland, who had shewn a partiality for poems of this kind, by patronizing the "Reliques of Ancient English Poetry," published in the same year. In that collection is a little tale, entitled "The Friar of Orders Grey:" in which the circumstances of the story bearing some resemblance to those in Goldsmith's Hermit, the Doctor who was always in a state of war with the inferior scribblers, was afterwards taxed with having taken his ballad from that in the Reliques. On this he published a letter in the St. James's Chronicle, June 1767*, wherein he justly vindicated the priority of his own poem; but in asserting that the plan of the other was taken from his (in nothing else have they the most dis-

Dr. Johnson	Major Rennel
Sir Wm. Jones	Sir Joshua Reynolds
Mr. Langton	Sir Wm. Scott
The Duke of Leeds	Mr. R. B. Sheridan
Earl Lucan	Dr. Shipley, Bishop of St. Asaph
Earl M'Cartney	Dr. Adam Smith
Mr. Malone	Earl Spencer
Dr. Marlay, Bp. of Waterford	Mr. George Steevens
Dr. Nugent	Mr. Agmondesham Vesey
Hon. Frederick North	Dr. Warren
The Earl of Upper Ossory	Rev. Dr. Joseph Warton
Visc. Palmerston	Rev. Thomas Warton
Dr. Percy, Bishop of Dromore	Rt. Hon. W. Windham.

* This may be seen prefixed to the ballad in this edition.

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tant resemblance), and in reporting the conversation on this subject, his memory must have failed him; for the story in them both was evidently taken from a very ancient ballad in that collection, beginning thus, "Gentle Heardsman," &c. (Vol. II. No. 14), as any one will be convinced who will but compare them. This Dr. Goldsmith had seen and admired long before it was printed; and how well he had imitated some parts of it, will appear by examining the following stanzas:

FROM THE OLD BALLAD.

And grew soe coy, and nice to please,
As women's lookes are often soe,
He might not kisse, nor hand forsoothe,
Unless I willed him soe to doe.

Thus being wearyed with delayes
To see I pittyed not his greeffe,
He gott him to a secrett place,
And there he dyed without releeffe.

And for his sake these weeds I weare,
And sacrifice my tender age;
And every day I'll beg my bread,
To undergoe this pilgrimage.

Thus every day I fast and pray,
And ever will doe till I dye;
And gett me to some secret place,
For soe did hee, and soe will I.

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FROM THE HERMIT.

For still I try'd each fickle art,
Importunate and vain;
And while his passion touch'd my heart,
I triumph'd in his pain.

Till quite dejected by my scorn,
He left me to my pride;
And sought a solitude forlorn,
In secret where he died.

But mine the sorrow, mine the fault,
And well my life shall pay;
I'll seek the solitude he sought,
And stretch me where he lay.

And there forlorn, despairing hid,
I'll lay me down and die;
'Twas so for me that Edwin did,
And so for him will I.

The edition of "The Hermit" given in these volumes, contains an additional stanza* never before printed; for which the reader is indebted to Richard Archdal, Esq. late a member of the Irish

* It is now the thirtieth stanza, beginning thus:
And when beside me, &c.

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parliament, to whom it was presented by the author himself.

From Dr. Goldsmith's success as a critic, a novelist, and a moral poet, he was afterwards encouraged to court the Dramatic Muse, and he composed his comedy, "The Good-Natured Man." This he first offered to Garrick, who, after a long fluctuation between doubt and encouragement, with his usual uncertainty, at length declined receiving it for his theatre of Drury-lane; and it was at last produced at Covent-garden, where it was represented for the first time January 29, 1768. It kept possession of the stage for nine nights, but was not judged by the author's friends to have had all the success it deserved. Boswell relates, that Johnson praised Goldsmith's "Good-Natured Man," and said it was the best comedy that had appeared since "The Provoked Husband;" and that there had not been of late any such character exhibited on the stage as Croaker. I observed, continues Boswell, it was the Suspirius of his Rambler. He said, Goldsmith had owned he had borrowed it from thence*.

But while he was composing this comedy, and preparing afterwards to take a more successful flight in his fine poem of "The Deserted Village," which was published in 1769, he wrote for present support at the instance of the booksellers,

* Life of Johnson, vol. II. p. 48.

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and for the instruction chiefly of young readers, a series of histories, which he never considered as conducive to his fame. These were, his "Roman History," in two volumes 8vo. chiefly compiled from Livy; and afterwards an "Abridgment" of it in one volume 12mo. both printed for Thomas Davies. For whom he also compiled a "History of England," in four volumes 8vo*; which per-

* It may gratify the curiosity of the Reader, to see the articles of agreement concerning these last two publications, which were drawn up by Dr. Goldsmith himself.

"MEMORANDUM.

"Russel-street, Covent-garden.

"It is agreed between Oliver Goldsmith, M. B. on the one hand, and Thomas Davies, bookseller, of Russel-street, Covent-garden, on the other, that Oliver Goldsmith shall write for Thomas Davies, an History of England, from the birth of the British Empire, to the death of George the Second, in four volumes octavo, of the size and the letter of the Roman History, written by Oliver Goldsmith. The said History of England shall be written and compiled in the space of two years from the date hereof. And when the said History is written and delivered in manuscript, the printer giving his opinion that the quantity above-mentioned is completed, that then Oliver Goldsmith shall be paid by Thomas Davies the sum of five hundred pounds sterling, for having written and compiled the same. It is agreed also, that Oliver Goldsmith shall print his name to the said work. In witness whereof we have set our names this thirteenth of June, 1769.

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH,

"THOMAS DAVIES."

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formance, like the preceding, although elegantly written, and highly calculated to attract and interest young readers, enters into no critical discussion of disputed points, and is often superficial and inaccurate.

Of this we have a striking instance in his account of one of the most remarkable occurrences in the history of his own country, to which he might have been expected to have been most attentive. This was the celebrated siege of Londonderry in 1689, sustained for 104 days against a numerous and cruel French army, after that city had been aban-

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"MEMORANDUM.

"September 15, 1770.

"It is agreed between Oliver Goldsmith, M. B. and Thomas Davies, of Covent-garden, bookseller, that Oliver Goldsmith shall abridge for Thomas Davies the book entitled 'Goldsmith's Roman History,' in two volumes 8vo. into one volume in 12mo. so as to fit it for the use of such as will not be at the expense of that in 8vo. For the abridging of the said history, and for putting his name thereto, said Thomas Davies shall pay Oliver Goldsmith fifty guineas, to be paid him on the abridgment and delivery of the copy: as witness our hands.

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH,

"THOMAS DAVIES."

Since Dr. Goldsmith's death, "An Abridgment of the History of Greece" has been published under his name, in which his friends believe he had no concern, though it is possible he may have intended a compilation on that subject.

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doned by the military commanders, as utterly untenable, and not furnished with provisions for more than ten days: but Providence had raised them up a heaven-taught general, the Rev. George Walker, a clergyman, who had chanced to take refuge in that city; and who, with the assistance of one or two officers, accidentally there, conducted their defence with such admirable courage, skill, and judgment, and was so well seconded by the persevering valour, fortitude, and patience of the poor destitute inhabitants, that they finally saved the city, and thereby in effect, as was then judged, the whole kingdom.

This extraordinary man is slightly mentioned by Goldsmith, as "one Walker, a dissenting minister:" for which he received a proper reproof in the following letter:

TO DR. GOLDSMITH.

SIR,

I BEG leave to acquaint you, there is a mistake in your Abridgment of the History of England, respecting Dr. Walker, viz. "one Walker, a dissenting minister."

I venture to assure you, Mr. Walker was a clergyman of the established church of Ireland, that was appointed Bishop of Dromore by king William for his services at Derry; but was unfortunately killed at the battle of the Boyne. Which I hope you will

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be pleased to insert in future editions of your late book.

The Duke of Schomberg was certainly killed in passing the river Boyne. I am, Sir, with great respect,

Your most obedient humble servant,

THOMAS WOOLSEY.

Dundalk, April 10, 1772.

Had this ecclesiastic been, as Goldsmith supposed, a dissenting minister, he ought not to have passed over with so little notice a man, of whatever profession, who had been the instrument of saving so many lives and a whole city from destruction. But it was the fate of Walker to be considered with almost as little attention by King William himself, to whose cause he had afforded such important assistance. For when the king heard he was killed in the field of battle, he asked with true Batavian *sang-froid*, "What business had he there?" But his Majesty should have considered, that although Mr. Walker wore a black coat and not a red one, he had shewn great skill and courage in one of the most arduous services in war; that he had displayed a very superior genius for military command, and had been led by a natural and allowable curiosity to view the conduct of a battle under so distinguished a commander, and

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to examine critically a subject, in one branch of which he had shewn himself so great a master*.

Besides his regular histories, of which Dr. Johnson thought very favourably †, Goldsmith had all the other business of an author by profession: he wrote introductions and prefaces to the books and compilations of other writers; many of which have never come to our notice, but such as have occurred will be inserted in this collection. They all exhibit ingenious proofs of his talents as a composer, and generally give a better display of the subjects than could have been done by their own authors. But herein he is rather to be considered as an advocate pleading the cause of another, than delivering his own sentiments, for he often recommends the peculiarities, if not the defects of a work; which, if his pen were engaged on the other side, he would with equal ability and eloquence detect. The reader will find something like this in an address to the public, which was to usher in proposals (dated March 1, 1764, for

* A curious Journal, which he had kept of all that passed during the siege, was published at that time in 4to. and republished by the late Dr. Brown, author of the Estimate, &c.

One very remarkable providence happened to the besieged, who, being reduced by extremest famine to eat unwholesome food, were dying fast of the bloody flux: when accidentally discovering some concealed barrels of starch and tallow, they had thereby their hunger not only relieved, but were cured of their dysentery.

† Boswell, vol. II. p. 234.

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"A New History of the World from the Creation to the present Time. By William Guthrie, Esq. &c. in 12 volumes, 8vo. to be printed for Newbery, &c." This was to be an abridgment of all the volumes of the ancient and modern universal histories: and he urges a great variety of topics in praise of such contracting and condensing histories as the present subject required; which with equal ingenuity he could have opposed and confuted. But the whole is excellent as a composition. In the preceding year, he drew up a Preface or Introduction to Dr. Brooks's "System of Natural History," 1763, in 6 vols. 12mo. a very dull and uninteresting work; but in this preface he gave an admirable display of the subject, which he rendered so extremely interesting and captivating, that the booksellers were induced by it to engage him in his larger work of the "History of the Earth and Animated Nature." This, although finely written, is full of mistakes and defects, from which the preliminary essay or prospectus of the subject is entirely free: of this work Dr. Johnson said, "He is now writing a Natural History, and will make it as entertaining as a Persian tale*."

He also drew up a "Life of Parnell," to be prefixed to an edition of his poems, in which the want of incidents in the private life of a scholar

* Boswell's Life, vol. II. p. 236.

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is very ingeniously supplied by the biographer's reflections.

Johnson in his Lives of the Poets says, "The life of Dr. Parnell is a task which I should very willingly decline, since it has been lately written by Goldsmith, a man of such variety of powers, and such felicity of performance, that he always seemed to do best that which he was doing; a man who had the art of being minute without tediousness, and general without confusion; whose language was copious without exuberance, exact without constraint, and easy without weakness.

"What such an author has told, who would tell again? I have made an abstract from his larger narration: and have this gratification from my attempt, that it gives me an opportunity of paying due tribute to the memory of Goldsmith."

Τὸ γὰρ γέρας ἔστι θάνοντων.

In another of his undertakings for the trade he was not so successful; for, being desired by Griffin the bookseller to make a selection of elegant Poems from our best English classics, for the use of boarding-schools, and to prefix to it one of his captivating prefaces, he carelessly, without reading it, marked for the printer one of the most indecent tales of Prior. This, as might be supposed, prevented the sale of the book, which had been printed in two vols. 12mo. Of this production the late ingenious Mr. Headley

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says, "Dr. Goldsmith, who was only unhappy, amidst all the works he undertook, in his Beauties of English Poetry, disgraced himself by a very superficial and hasty publication of this kind."

Our author wrote also the "Life of Lord Bolingbroke," which he prefixed to the "Dissertation on Parties," which was printed for T. Davies in 1771, and again in the year 1775, with Goldsmith's name affixed to it: it is also inserted in the large edition of Bolingbroke's Works, which appeared in the year 1777.

We are not sure that we have mentioned the preceding publications in their regular order, and have doubtless omitted many similar pieces, as well as occasional contributions to periodical works.

But his admirable poem "The Deserted Village," published in 1769, atoned for every defect or mistake of the author; who frequently looked back with regret on those sacrifices to necessity. It has been said by former biographers, that, having received for the copy of his poem a note for one hundred guineas from the bookseller, and one of his acquaintances observing to him that it was a great sum for so short a performance, he went and returned the note. But although this would have been perfectly in character, the Doctor was not quite so ignorant of the value of his own time and labour; and it is well known, from the severe corrections and high finishing which he bestowed

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on that and his former ethic poem, that each of them had cost him more time than many of his compilations, for which he demanded a larger price than the sum above-mentioned.

At the establishment of the Royal Academy of Painting, his friend Sir Joshua Reynolds had procured for him the appointment of Professor of Ancient History; a mere complimentary distinction, attended neither with emolument nor trouble, but which gave him a respectable seat at their occasional meetings, and what perhaps was better, at their annual dinner. The following letter shews the proper sense he had of this distinction, and displays also the benevolence of his heart, and his kind regard for his family.

TO

MR. MAURICE GOLDSMITH*,

AT JAMES LAWDER'S, ESQ. AT KILMORE, NEAR CARRICK ON SHANNON.

January, 1770.

DEAR BROTHER,

I SHOULD have answered your letter sooner, but in truth I am not fond of thinking of

* This was our poet's youngest brother. Having been bred to no business, he upon some occasion complained to our bard, that he found it difficult to live like a gentleman. On which Oliver begged he would, without delay, quit so unprofitable a trade, and betake himself to some handicraft employment.

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the necessities of those I love, when it is so very little in my power to help them. I am sorry to find you are still every way unprovided for; and what adds to my uneasiness is, that I have received a letter from my sister Johnson*, by which I learn that she is pretty much in the same circumstances. As to myself, I believe I could get both you and my poor brother-in-law something like that which you desire, but I am determined never to ask for little things, nor exhaust any little interest I may have until I can serve you, him, and myself more effectually. As yet no opportunity has offered, but I believe you are pretty well convinced that I will not be remiss when it arrives. The King has lately been pleased to make me Professor of Ancient History in a Royal Academy of Painting, which he has just established; but there is no salary annexed, and I took it

Maurice wisely took the hint, and bound himself apprentice to a cabinet-maker. He had a shop in Dublin, when the Duke of Rutland was lord lieutenant; who, at the instance of Mr. Orde, then principal secretary of state (now Lord Bolton), out of regard to his brother's memory, made him an inspector of the licences in that city. He was also appointed mace-bearer on the erection of the Royal Irish Academy: both of them places very compatible with his business. In the former he gave proof of great integrity, by detecting a fraud committed on the revenue in his department, by which probably he might himself have profited, if he had not been a man of principle. died without issue, about the year 1794.

* His youngest sister, who had married unfortunately.

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rather as a compliment to the institution, than any benefit to myself. Honours to one in my situation are something like ruffles to a man that wants a shirt. You tell me that there are fourteen or fifteen pounds left me in the hands of my cousin Lawder, and you ask me what I would have done with them. My dear brother, I would by no means give any directions to my dear worthy relations at Kilmore, how to dispose of money, which is, properly speaking, more theirs than mine. All that I can say is, that I entirely, and this letter will serve to witness, give up any right and title to it; and I am sure they will dispose of it to the best advantage. To them I entirely leave it, whether they or you may think the whole necessary to fit you out, or whether our poor sister Johnson may not want the half, I leave entirely to their and your discretion. The kindness of that good couple to our poor shattered family demands our sincerest gratitude; and though they have almost forgot me, yet, if good things at last arrive, I hope one day to return, and increase their good humour by adding to my own. I have sent my cousin Jenny a miniature picture of myself, as I believe it is the most acceptable present I can offer. I have ordered it to be left for her at George Faulkener's, folded in a letter. The face, you well know, is ugly enough, but it is finely painted. I will shortly also send my friends over the Shannon some metzotinto prints of myself, and some more of my friends here, such as Burke,

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Johnson, Reynolds, and Colman. I believe I have written an hundred letters to different friends in your country, and never received an answer from any of them. I do not know how to account for this, or why they are unwilling to keep up for me these regards, which I must ever retain for them. If then you have a mind to oblige me, you will write often whether I answer you or not. Let me particularly have the news of our family and old acquaintances. For instance, you may begin by telling me about the family where you reside, how they spend their time, and whether they ever make mention of me. Tell me about my mother, my brother Hodson, and his son; my brother Harry's son and daughter, my sister Johnson, the family of Ballyoughter, what is become of them, where they live, and how they do. You talked of being my only brother, I don't understand you—where is Charles? A sheet of paper occasionally, filled with news of this kind, would make me very happy, and would keep you nearer my mind. As it is, my dear brother, believe me to be

Yours, most affectionately,

OLIVER GOLDSMITH*.

*To the original is annexed a receipt which shews that the sum of 15*l.* was paid to Maurice Goldsmith, for a legacy bequeathed to Oliver Goldsmith by the late Rev. Thomas Contarine. Dated 4th. Feb. 1770.

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The following letter, though without a date, is believed to have been written in the same year, 1770, when he accompanied a party of ladies to Paris. The humour displayed in this short billet, hastily written on his landing at Calais, makes us regret that he did not continue the correspondence during the remainder of this journey, and the whole time of his continuance in France.

TO

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

We had a very quick passage from Dover to Calais, which we performed in three hours and twenty minutes, all of us extremely sea-sick, which must necessarily have happened, as my machine to prevent sea-sickness was not completed. We were glad to leave Dover, because we hated to be imposed upon; so were in high spirits at coming to Calais, where we were told that a little money would go a great way. Upon landing two little trunks, which was all we carried with us, we were surprised to see fourteen or fifteen fellows all running down to the ship to lay their hands upon them; four got under each trunk, the rest surrounded, and held the hasps; and in this manner our little baggage was conducted, with a kind of

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funeral solemnity, till it was safely lodged at the Custom-house. We were well enough pleased with the people's civility, till they came to be paid: every creature that had the happiness of but touching our trunks with their finger, expected six-pence; and they had so pretty civil a manner of demanding it, that there was no refusing them. When we had done with the porters, we had next to speak with the custom-house officers, who had their pretty civil way too. We were directed to the Hotel d'Angleterre, where a valet-de-place came to offer his service, and spoke to me ten minutes before I once found out that he was speaking English. We had no occasion for his service, so we gave him a little money because he spoke English, and because he wanted it. I cannot help mentioning another circumstance; I bought a new ribbon for my wig at Canterbury, and the barber at Calais broke it in order to gain six-pence by buying me a new one.

In the following year our author had received a very obliging invitation from Bennet Langton, Esq. and his lady the Countess of Rothes, to spend some part of the autumn with them at their seat in Lincolnshire, claiming at the same time a promise from Sir Joshua Reynolds to pay them a visit along with Goldsmith. The following answer, published by Mr. Langton's permission,

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gives us a very satisfactory account how our author was employed at that time, and some interesting particulars of others of their friends.

TO

BENNET LANGTON, ESQ.

AT LANGTON, NEAR SPILSBY, IN LINCOLNSHIRE.

MY DEAR SIR,

SINCE I had the pleasure of seeing you last, I have been almost wholly in the country at a farmer's house, quite alone, trying to write a comedy. It is now finished, but when or how it will be acted, or whether it will be acted at all, are questions I cannot resolve. I am therefore so much employed upon that, that I am under the necessity of putting off my intended visit to Lincolnshire for this season. Reynolds is just returned from Paris, and finds himself now in the case of a truant that must make up for his idle time by diligence. We have therefore agreed to postpone our journey till next summer, when we hope to have the honour of waiting upon Lady Rothes, and you, and staying double the time of our late intended visit. We often meet, and never without remembering you. I see Mr. Beauclerc very often both in town and country. He is now going directly forward to become a second

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Boyle: deep in chemistry and physics. Johnson has been down upon a visit to a country parson, Doctor Taylor: and is returned to his old haunts at Mrs. Thrale's. Burke is a farmer, *en attendant* a better place; but visiting about too. Every soul is a visiting about and merry but myself. And that is hard too, as I have been trying these three months to do something to make people laugh. There have I been strolling about the hedges, studying jests with a most tragical countenance. The "Natural History" is about half finished, and I will shortly finish the rest. God knows, I am tired of this kind of finishing, which is but bungling work, and that not so much my fault as the fault of my scurvy circumstances. They begin to talk in town of the Opposition's gaining ground; the cry of liberty is still as loud as ever. I have published, or Davies has published for me, "An Abridgment of the History of England," for which I have been a good deal abused in the newspapers for betraying the liberties of the people. God knows, I had no thought for or against liberty in my head; my whole aim being to make up a book of a decent size, that, as 'Squire Richard says, "would do no harm to nobody." However, they set me down as an arrant Tory, and consequently an honest man. When you come to look at any part of it, you 'll say that I am a sour Whig. God bless you, and

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with my most respectful compliments to her Ladyship, I remain, dear Sir,

Your most affectionate
Humble Servant,
OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

Temple, Brick Court,
Sept. 7, 1771.

But it was not only from his intimate friends that Dr. Goldsmith received epistolary addresses; the celebrity of his writings, and the opinion of his benevolence, attracted to him attention and regard from all quarters. Among the multitude of letters that were sent him, we shall select the following from two remarkable characters, but as opposite as can be found between a friend and an enemy of the human race; the one distinguished for the most exalted application, the other for the vilest abuse, of singular talents: both intimately connected with the history of America, where the one had founded a flourishing colony, the other hath endeavoured to poison and corrupt all the colonies. Not to keep the reader longer in suspense, these are two letters from the venerable General Oglethorpe, the founder of Georgia; and the notorious Thomas Paine, then an officer of the excise, whose claim therein to singular modesty will divert the reader.

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FROM

GENERAL OGLETHORPE.

How just, Sir, were your observations, that the poorest objects were by extreme poverty deprived of the benefit of hospitals erected for the relief of the poorest.

Extreme poverty, which should be the strongest recommendation to charity, is here the insurmountable objection, which leaves the distressed to perish.

The qualifying such objects to receive the benefit of hospitals answers the intentions of the intended society. The design is the immediate relief from perishing; thereby giving time and protection to get proper destinations. And this of being admitted into an hospital is a proper destination.

You were so good as to offer to distribute such sums as should be sent to you.

At the same time that I am to return you thanks for your charitable offer, I am to send you five pounds to be distributed for that purpose, in the time and manner you think proper. Which I accordingly herewith send.

You have seen, I suppose, in the St. James's Evening Post, from September 22 to 25, the Zoilus

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that attacked you, treated with proper contempt.

If a farm and a mere country scene will be a little refreshment from the smoke of London, we shall be glad of the happiness of seeing you at Cranham Hall. It is sixteen miles from the Three Nuns at Whitechapel, where Prior our stage-coach [man] inns. He sets out at two in the afternoon.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient humble Servant,

J. OGLETHORPE.

Cranham Hall, (by Gray's Bag) Essex.
[*No Date.*]

FROM

THOMAS PAINE.

HONOURED SIR,

HEREWITH I present you with the case of the officers of excise. A compliment of this kind from an entire stranger may appear somewhat singular; but the following reasons and information will, I presume, sufficiently apologize.

I act myself in the humble station of an officer of excise, though somewhat differently circumstanced to what many of them are, and have been the principal promoter of a plan for applying to Parliament this session for an increase of salary. A petition for

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this purpose has been circulated through every part of the kingdom, and signed by all the officers therein. A subscription of three shillings per officer is raised, amounting to upwards of five hundred pounds, for supporting the expenses.

The excise officers in all cities and corporate towns have obtained letters of recommendation from the electors to the members in their behalf, many or most of whom have promised their support. The inclosed case we have presented to most of the members, and shall to all, before the petition appears in the house.

The memorial before you met with so much approbation while in manuscript, that I was advised to print four thousand copies: three thousand of which were subscribed for by the officers in general, and the remaining one thousand reserved for presents.

Since the delivering them, I have received so many letters of thanks and approbation for the performance, that were I not rather singularly modest, I should insensibly become a little vain.

The literary fame of Dr. Goldsmith has induced me to present one to him, such as it is. 'Tis my first and only attempt, and even now I should not have undertaken it, had I not been particularly applied to by some of my superiors in office.

I have some few questions to trouble Dr. Goldsmith with, and should esteem his company for an

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hour or two, to partake of a bottle of wine or any thing else, and apologize for this trouble, as a singular favour conferred on

His unknown humble Servant,
and Admirer,
THOMAS PAINE.

Excise Coffee House, Broad Street,
December 21, 1772.

P.S. Shall take the liberty of waiting on you in a day or two.

In the preceding pages we have not retailed every story which had been inserted in former accounts of our poet's life, expressive of his disinterested and generous simplicity, or of the facility with which he was the dupe of fraudulent artifice. Many instances of both might be produced, but some of those formerly printed we do not believe to be genuine. Certain however it is, that there never were a heart and purse so open to the calls of pity, and the applications of distress, whether real or pretended, as Dr. Goldsmith's. Great therefore was the number of solicitations continually made to him, and always with success. Emigrants from his own country, and especially the poor scribblers from it, constantly lived upon him; but indeed adventurers from all countries found access to him, and emptied his pockets. I shall mention a few instances.

Very soon after Dr. Goldsmith first settled as a

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physician in London, the noted John Carteret Pilkington found him out, and one day came to him with earnest solicitations to lend him a few guineas, which he said would perhaps enable him to make his fortune. He mentioned a great lady, perhaps the late Duchess of Portland, who, he said, extended her favour and protection to all that could supply her with rare and uncommon animals; that he had got a white mouse to present to her Grace, but was destitute of clothes fit to appear before her. Poor Goldsmith swallowed the tale, but in those early days was himself without money: Pilkington easily surmounted that difficulty by proposing to the doctor to let him pawn his watch, and actually prevailed; but from that time he heard no more of his watch, the white mouse, or Mr. Pilkington.

Some years after, when the Doctor had gained admission into better company, there was a foreigner in London, a Colonel Chevalier de Champigny (so he entitled himself), who, having obtained some countenance from the Bavarian ambassador, raised contributions among our nobility by soliciting subscriptions of seven guineas and a half to be paid beforehand for a History of England, in 15 volumes, which he was to write in French. Even this adventurer introduced himself to our simple and credulous poet, and got his full subscription of seven guineas and a half, when he probably had not another left in his pocket.

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We shall mention one other instance, which had a more serious issue. A native of his own country, of the name of Griffin, who had been educated in some foreign seminary, whence he had fled to England, attacked at once Garrick and Goldsmith; the former in a poetical éloge of the most extravagant praise, and the latter in letters pointing out the most affecting distress. He desired Goldsmith, as his countryman, to intercede for him with the celebrated dramatist, which he generously did: though the writer of this, who hath perused both the verses and the letters, saw no attempt to flatter Goldsmith, or to interest him otherwise than through his compassion. They concurred however in their endeavours to serve him, and at his earnest request recommended him to be a teacher in an academy. He had not been long in this situation, before he robbed the house, and made his escape.

On the 15th March, 1773, Dr. Goldsmith's second comedy, "The Mistakes of a Night, or She Stoops to Conquer*," made its appearance at Covent-garden, where it was not admitted by Mr. Colman without some difficulty, and even much and urgent solicitation of their common friends. But it was received by the audience with the

* He had at first intended to entitle it "The Old House a New Inn."

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highest applause, contrary to the expectation of the manager. For what is called sentimental comedy had at that time such entire possession of the stage, that Mr. Colman had almost despaired of its success, even to the end of the first representation. So that when the author, towards the conclusion, happened to express some little doubt whether one of the sallies of Tony Lumpkin would be relished by the audience, the manager replied, "Psha, my dear Doctor, do not be fearful of squibs, when we have been sitting almost these two hours on a barrel of gunpowder."

In a letter to Boswell, written in the year 1773, Dr. Johnson says, "Dr. Goldsmith has a new Comedy, which is expected in the spring. No name is yet given it. The chief diversion arises from a stratagem by which a lover is made to mistake his future father-in-law's house for an inn. This, you see, borders upon farce. The dialogue is quick and gay, and the incidents are so prepared as not to seem improbable*."

On another occasion Dr. Johnson declared, "That he knew of no comedy for many years that has so much exhilarated an audience, that has answered so much the great end of comedy—making an audience merry†."

* Boswell's Life of Johnson, vol. II. p. 205.

† Ibid. vol. II. p. 232.

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This comedy was very successful, and afterwards kept possession of the stage as a stock-play. It added very much to the author's reputation, and, as was usual with Dr. Goldsmith, brought down upon him a torrent of congratulatory addresses and petitions from less fortunate bards, whose indigence compelled them to solicit his bounty, and of scurrilous abuse from such of them as, being less reduced, only envied his success. We shall produce an instance of each.

ON DR. GOLDSMITH'S COMEDY,

"SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER."

Quite sick in her bed Thalia was laid,
A sentiment puke had quite kill'd the sweet maid,
Her bright eyes lost all of their fire:
When a regular Doctor, one Goldsmith by name,
Found out her disorder as soon as he came,
And has made her (for ever 'twill crown all his fame)
As lively as one can desire.

Oh! Doctor, assist a poor bard who lies ill,
Without e'er a nurse, e'er a potion, or pill;
From your kindness he hopes for some ease.
You 're a GOOD-NATURED MAN all the world does allow,
O would your good-nature but shine forth just now,
In a manner—I 'm sure your good sense will tell how,
Your servant most humbly 'twould please.

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The bearer is the author's wife, and an answer from Dr. Goldsmith by her, will be ever gratefully acknowledged by his

Humble Servant,

JOHN OAKMAN,

ORANGE COURT, SWALLOW STREET,

CARNABY MARKET.

Saturday, March 27, 1773.

The other was an attempt to check our author's triumph, on the ninth night of the representation, and was inserted in the London Packet of Wednesday evening, March 24th, 1773, printed for T. Evans, in Paternoster-row*. As our successful

* We would not defile our page with this scurrilous production, so shall insert it in the margin.

FOR THE LONDON PACKET.

TO DR. GOLDSMITH.

Vous vous noyez par vanité.

SIR,

THE happy knack which you have learnt of puffing your own compositions provokes me to come forth. You have not been the editor of newspapers and magazines, not to discover the trick of literary *humbug*. But the gauze is so thin, that the very foolish part of the world see through it, and discover the Doctor's monkey face and cloven foot. Your poetic vanity is as unpardonable as your personal;—would man believe it, and will woman bear it, to be told, that for hours the *great* Goldsmith will stand surveying his grotesque oranhotan's figure in a pier glass? Was but the lovely H——k as much enamoured, you

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bard, we can scarcely suppose, could be much elevated by the panegyrical strains or addresses of his supplicatory adulators; so doubtless he would have treated the base scurrility of his envious detractors with equal disregard or contempt, but for the officious kindness of one of those good friends who are so obliging as to take care that nothing disagreeable shall escape the notice of the aggrieved party. The offensive publication was very eagerly brought to him by a friend of this stamp, who is believed to have been one of his

would not sigh, my gentle swain, in vain.' But your vanity is preposterous. How will this same bard of Bedlam ring the changes in the praise of Goldy!—But what has he either to be proud or vain of? "The Traveller" is a flimsy poem, built upon false principles; principles diametrically opposite to liberty. What is "The Good-natured Man," but a poor, water-gruel dramatic dose? What is "The Deserted Village," but a *pretty* poem, of easy numbers, without fancy, dignity, genius, or fire? And pray what may be the last *speaking pantomime* so praised by the Doctor himself, but an incoherent piece of stuff, the figure of a woman with a fish's tail, without plot, incident, or intrigue. We are made to laugh at stale, dull jokes, wherein we mistake pleasantry for wit, and grimace for humour; wherein every scene is unnatural, and inconsistent with the rules, the laws of nature, and of drama, viz. Two gentlemen come to a man of fortune's house, eat, drink, sleep, &c. and take it for an inn. The one is intended as a lover to the daughter; he talks with her for some hours, and when he sees her again in a different dress, he treats her as a bar-girl, and swears she squinted. He abuses the master of the house, and threatens to kick him out of his own doors. The Squire, who we are told is to be a fool, proves the most sensible being of the piece; and he makes out

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own countrymen, an officer in the army, who thought he could not confer on him a greater favour than by engaging him in a quarrel.

Among his papers has been found the following unfinished relation of the adventure, dictated to an amanuensis; for the poor Doctor's hand was too much bruised to hold a pen.

"As I find the public have been informed by the newspapers of a slight fray, which happened between me and the editor of an evening paper; to prevent their being imposed upon, the account is shortly this.

a whole act, by bidding his mother lie close behind a bush, persuading her that his father, her own husband, is a highwayman, and that he is come to cut their throats; and to give his cousin an opportunity to go off, he drives his mother over hedges, ditches, and through ponds. There is not, sweet sucking Johnson, a natural stroke in the whole play, but the young fellow's giving the stolen jewels to the mother, supposing her to be the landlady. That Mr. Colman did no justice to this piece, I honestly allow; that he told all his friends it would be damned, I positively aver; and from such ungenerous insinuations, without a dramatic merit, it rose to public notice, and it is now the *ton* to go to see it; though I never saw a person that either liked it or approved it, any more than the absurd plot of *the Home's* tragedy of *Alonzo*. Mr. Goldsmith, correct your arrogance! reduce your vanity; and endeavour to believe, as a man, you are of the plainest sort; and as an author, but a mortal piece of mediocrity.

Brise le miroir infidèle,
Qui vous cache la vérité.

TOM TICKLE.

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"A friend of mine came on Friday o inform me that a paragraph was inserted against me in the London Packet, which I was in honour bound to resent. I read the paper, and considered it in the same light as he did. I went to the editor, and struck him with my cane on the back. A scuffle ensued." * * *

The editor alleged, that Dr. Goldsmith came into his shop, and thus accosted him: "You have published a thing in your paper, (my name is Goldsmith,) reflecting upon a young lady. As for myself I do not mind it." The publisher (who was probably as unconscious of the mischief to which he was instrumental, as the horse that draws the artillery is of the havock it makes) stooped down to look behind his counter for the paper complained of; when our poet's friend pointed to the man's back, as presenting a fair mark for his cane; which he exercised upon it without mercy; and, as he says, "a scuffle ensued," wherein the Doctor himself got his share of blows, while his military friend, with great *sang-froid,* stood looking on. Nor is it easy to guess how it might have ended, when Dr. Kenrick, a noted libeller, who was believed to be the author of the scurrilous letter, and was all the while in the publisher's counting-house, at length thought proper to interpose, parted the combatants, and sent the Doctor, severely bruised, home in a coach.

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The subject of this dispute was long discussed in the public papers, which descanted on the impropriety of attacking a man in his own house; and an action was threatened for the assault; which was at length compromised, after our bard had published in the Daily Advertiser of March 31, 1773, the following address:

TO THE PUBLIC.

Lest it should be supposed that I have been willing to correct in others an abuse of which I have been guilty myself, I beg leave to declare, that in all my life I never wrote, or dictated, a single paragraph, letter, or essay, in a newspaper, except a few moral essays, under the character of a Chinese, about ten years ago, in the Ledger; and a letter, to which I signed my name, in the St. James's Chronicle. If the liberty of the press, therefore, has been abused, I have had no hand in it.

I have always considered the press as the protector of our freedom, as a watchful guardian, capable of uniting the weak against the encroachments of power. What concerns the public most properly admits of a public discussion. But of late the press has turned from defending public interest, to making inroads upon private life; from combating the strong, to overwhelming the feeble. No condition is now too obscure for its abuse, and the protector is become the tyrant of the people.

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In this manner the freedom of the press is beginning to sow the seeds of its own dissolution; the great must oppose it from principle, and the weak from fear; till at last every rank of mankind shall be found to give up its benefits, content with security from its insults.

How to put a stop to this licentiousness, by which all are indiscriminately abused, and by which vice consequently escapes in the general censure, I am unable to tell; all I could wish is, that, as the law gives us no protection against the injury, so it should give calumniators no shelter after having provoked correction. The insults which we receive before the public, by being more open, are the more distressing: by treating them with silent contempt, we do not pay a sufficient deference to the opinion of the world. By recurring to legal redress, we too often expose the weakness of the law, which only serves to increase our mortification by failing to relieve us. In short, every man should singly consider himself as a guardian of the liberty of the press, and, as far as his influence can extend, should endeavour to prevent its licentiousness becoming at last the grave of its freedom.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

On the subject of this adventure, we find the following curious and amusing conversation in Boswell.

"On Saturday, April 3," says the biographer,

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"the day after my arrival in London this year, I went to his (Dr. Johnson's) house late in the evening, and sat with Mrs. Williams till he came home. I found in the London Chronicle Dr. Goldsmith's apology to the public for beating Evans, a bookseller, on account of a paragraph in a newspaper published by him, which Goldsmith thought impertinent to him and to a lady of his acquaintance. The apology was written so much in Dr. Johnson's manner, that both Mrs. Williams and I supposed it to be his: but when he came home, he soon undeceived us. When he said to Mrs. Williams, "Well, Dr. Goldsmith's *manifesta* has got into your paper;" I asked him if Dr. Goldsmith had written it, with an air that made him see I suspected it was his, though subscribed by Goldsmith.

"*Johnson.* Sir, Dr. Goldsmith would no more have asked me to have wrote such a thing as that for him, than he would have asked me to feed him with a spoon, or to do any thing else that denoted his imbecility. I as much believe that he wrote it, as if I had seen him do it. Sir, had he shewn it to any one friend, he would not have been allowed to publish it. He has, indeed, done it very well, but it is a foolish thing well done. I suppose he has been so much elated with the success of his new comedy, that he has thought every thing that concerned him must be of importance to the public."

"*Boswell.* I fancy, Sir, this is the first time that he has been engaged in such an adventure."

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"*Johnson.* Why, Sir, I believe it is the first time he has *beat;* he may have been *beaten* before. This, Sir, is a new pleasure to him."

Dr. Johnson took every opportunity that presented itself of praising the talents and genius of our author. Goldsmith's medical friend, by whose valuable and interesting communications we have been much obliged, has furnished us with the following anecdote:

"I was dining at Sir Joshua Reynolds's, August 7, 1773, where, amongst other company, were the Archbishop of Tuam and Mr. (now Lord) Eliot; when, the latter making use of some sarcastical reflections on Goldsmith, Johnson broke out warmly in his defence, and in the course of a spirited eulogium said, 'Is there a man, Sir, now who can pen an essay with such ease and elegance as Goldsmith?'"

On another occasion this great critic observed, "Dr. Goldsmith is one of the first men we now have as an author, and he is a very worthy man too. He has been loose in his principles, but he is coming right*."

One of his last publications was "An History of the Earth and Animated Nature," in eight volumes octavo, which was published in 1774, and which for two or three years before he had been preparing. The elegance and purity of the style, the interest-

* Boswell's Life, vol. I. p. 367.

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ing and striking reflections with which it abounds, and the powers of description which so frequently appear, must atone for the want of original information on the subjects introduced, and for the occasional mistakes, which were impossible to be avoided by a writer who took all his materials on trust; and, as far as they could be supplied, chiefly from Buffon. For this work he is said to have been paid by the bookseller 850*l.*; and during the time he was engaged in this undertaking he had received the copy-money for his comedy, and the profits of his third nights; so that his receipts amounted at this time to a considerable sum. He was, however, so liberal in his donations, and profuse in his disbursements; he was unfortunately so attached to the pernicious practice of gaming; and from his unsettled habits of life, his supplies being precarious and uncertain, he had been so little accustomed to regulate his expenses by any system of economy, that his debts far exceeded his resources; and he was obliged to take up money in advance from the managers of the two theatres, for comedies which he engaged to furnish to each; and from the booksellers, for publications which he was to finish for the press. All these engagements he fully intended, and doubtless would have been able, to fulfil with the strictest honour, as he had done on former occasions in similar exigencies; but his premature death unhappily prevented the execution of his plans, and gave

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occasion to malignity to impute those failures to deliberate intention, which were merely the result of inevitable mortality.

Dr. Goldsmith, however, wrote by intervals about this time, his poems entitled "The Haunch of Venison," "Retaliation," and some other little sportive sallies, which were not printed till after his death. He altered about this period "The Grumbler" from Sedley, which was acted at Covent-garden in the year 1772. This alteration was made to serve Mr. Quick at his benefit, and acted only on that night; it was never printed. But the chief publication which he was then projecting was, "An Universal Dictionary of Arts and Sciences." This he intended should be a work of general entertainment as well as instruction; in which, by the graces of his style and his powers of writing, he hoped to render his account of the other sciences as interesting and amusing as he had made natural history in his book of "Animated Nature." He had engaged all his literary friends, and the members of the club, to contribute articles each on the subject in which he excelled; so that it could not but have contained a great assemblage of excellent disquisitions. He accordingly had prepared a *Prospectus**, in which, as usual,

* This, with other papers and fugitive pieces, fell into the hands of Mr. Bott, a gentleman in the Temple, and author of a valuable work on the Poor Laws (since dead), who had lent Dr. Goldsmith large sums of money, and being his principal creditor, took possession of his effects, &c.

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he gave a luminous view of his design; but his death unfortunately prevented the execution of the work.

He was subject to severe fits of the strangury, owing probably to the intemperate manner in which he confined himself to the desk, when he was employed in his compilations, often indeed for several weeks successively without taking exercise. On such occasions he usually hired lodgings in some farm-house a few miles from London, and wrote without cessation till he had finished his task. He then carried his copy to the bookseller, received his compensation, and gave himself up, perhaps for months without interruption, to the gaieties, amusements, and societies of London.

And here it may be observed, once for all, that his elegant and enchanting style in prose flowed from him with such facility, that in whole quires of his Histories, Animated Nature, &c. he had seldom occasion to correct or alter a single word; but in his verses, especially his two great ethic poems, nothing could exceed the patient and incessant revisal which he bestowed upon them. To save himself the trouble of transcription, he wrote the lines in his first copy very wide, and would so fill up the intermediate space with reiterated corrections, that scarcely a word of his first effusions was left unaltered.

In the Spring of 1774, being embarrassed in his circumstances, and attacked with his usual malady,

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his indisposition, aggravated too by mental distress, terminated in a fever; which on 25th March had become exceedingly violent, when he called in medical assistance. Although he had then taken ipecacuanha to promote a vomit, he would proceed to the use of James's Fever Powder, contrary to the advice of the medical gentlemen who attended him. From the application of these powders he had received the greatest benefit in a similar attack nearly two years before, but then they had been administered by Dr. James himself in person. This happened in September 1772. But now the progress of the disease was as unfavourable as possible; for from the time abovementioned every symptom became more and more alarming till Monday, April 4th, when he died, aged 45.

Mr. Hawes, his apothecary, who had discouraged the use of these powders in the manner Dr. Goldsmith chose to apply them, published in vindication of himself, and of two eminent physicians who had concurred with him in opposing their patient's use of them, "An account of the late Dr. Goldsmith's illness, so far as relates to the exhibition of Dr. James's Powders, &c. London, printed for W. Brown, &c. 1774," 4to. In reply to some positions in this pamphlet an advertisement was printed in the papers, containing the depositions of the servants who had attended their master in his illness; in which it appeared that Goldsmith had strongly intimated his opinion, that he had not

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received the genuine powders, from the effects being so different from what he had ever experienced of this his favourite medicine.

It was deliberated by Sir Joshua Reynolds and other friends of the poor departed bard, whether it was more expedient to give him an expensive public funeral, or to inter him privately, and reserve the expenditure for a more lasting monument in the Poets' Corner in Westminster Abbey. The latter opinion prevailed, and his remains were privately interred in the Temple burial-ground, at five o'clock on Saturday evening, April 9, attended by the Rev. Joseph Palmer, (nephew of Sir Joshua Reynolds, and afterwards Dean of Cashel in Ireland,) Mr. Hugh Kelly, the dramatic poet, Messrs. John and Robert Day, Mr. Etherington, and Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Hawes, his apothecary.

By a subscription raised among our poet's friends, and chiefly by his brethren of the club, a marble monument was executed by Nollekens, and placed in Westminster Abbey, between that of Gay and the Duke of Argyle in the Poets' Corner; consisting of a large medallion, with a good resemblance of the Doctor in profile, embellished with appropriate ornaments; and underneath, on a tablet of white marble, the following inscription written by Dr. Johnson*.

* See a humorous account of an Address to Dr. Johnson, in the form of a round robin, concerning this epitaph, in Boswell's Life of Johnson, vol. III. p. 84.

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OLIVARI GOLDSMITH,
Poetæ, Physici, Historici,
Qui nullum ferè scribendi genus non tetigit,
Nullum, quod tetigit, non ornavit;
Sive Risus essent movendi,
Sive Lacrymæ,
Affectuum potens, at lenis Dominator:
Ingenio sublimis, vividus, versatilis,
Oratione grandis, nitidus, venustus:
Hoc Monumento Memoriam coluit
Sodalium Amor,
Amicorum Fides,
Lectorum Veneratio.
Natus in Hiberniâ Forniæ Longfordiensis
In loco cui nomen Pallas,
Nov. xxix. MDCCXXXI*.
Eblanæ Literis institutus,
Obiit Londini,
April iv. MDCCLXXIV.

In addition to this Latin epitaph, Dr. Johnson honoured the memory of his friend with the following Greek tetrastic:

* The year of Dr. Goldsmith's birth had been universally mistaken, till his family, some time after his death, furnished correct information of the circumstance, which they state to have happened in the year 1728. That he was born in that year is confirmed by his letter to his brother Henry, written in 1759, when, he says, his age was 31.

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Τὸν τάφον εἰσοράας τὸν Ὀλιβαρίοιο, κονίην
Ἄφροσι μὴ σεμνὴν, Ξεῖνε, πόδεσσι πάτει.
Οἷσι μέμηλε φύσις, μέτρων χάρις, ἔργα παλαιῶν,
Κλαίετε ποίητην, ἱστόρικον, φύσικον.

The general traits of Dr. Goldsmith's character have been in a great measure delineated in the preceding pages. He was generous in the extreme, and so strongly affected by compassion, that he has been known at midnight to abandon his rest, in order to procure relief and an asylum for a poor dying object who was left destitute in the streets. Nor was there ever a mind whose general feelings were more benevolent and friendly. He is however supposed to have been often soured by jealousy or envy; and many little instances are mentioned of this tendency in his character: but whatever appeared of this kind was a mere momentary sensation, which he knew not how like other men to conceal. It was never the result of principle, or the suggestion of reflection; it never imbittered his heart, nor influenced his conduct. Nothing could be more amiable than the general features of his mind; those of his person were not perhaps so engaging.

His stature was under the middle size, his body strongly built, and his limbs more sturdy than elegant: his complexion was pale, his forehead low, his face almost round, and pitted with the small-pox, but marked with strong lines of thinking. His first appearance was not captivating; but

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when he grew easy and cheerful in company, he relaxed into such a display of good humour, as soon removed every unfavourable impression.

Yet it must be acknowledged that in company he did not appear to so much advantage as might have been expected from his genius and talents. He was too apt to speak without reflection, and without a sufficient knowledge of the subject; which made Johnson observe of him, "No man was more foolish when he had not a pen in his hand, or more wise when he had*." Indeed with all his defects, (to conclude nearly in the words of that great critic†) "As a writer he was of the most distinguished abilities. Whatever he composed, he did it better than any other man could. And whether we consider him as a Poet, as a Comic Writer, or as an Historian, (so far as regards his powers of composition,) he was one of the first writers of his time, and will ever stand in the foremost class."

* Boswell's Life, vol. IV. p. 29.
† Ibid. vol. III. p. 273.

END OF THE LIFE.

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THE

VICAR OF WAKEFIELD.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THERE are a hundred faults in this Thing, and a hundred things might be said to prove them beauties. But it is needless. A book may be amusing with numerous errors, or it may be very dull without a single absurdity. The hero of this piece unites in himself the three greatest characters upon earth: he is a priest, an husbandman, and the father of a family. He is drawn as ready to teach, and ready to obey; as simple in affluence, and majestic in adversity. In this age of opulence and refinement whom can such a character please? Such as are fond of high life will turn with disdain from the simplicity of his country fire-side. Such as mistake ribaldry for humour, will find no wit in his harmless conversation; and such as have been taught to deride religion, will laugh at one whose chief stores of comfort are drawn from futurity.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

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THE

VICAR OF WAKEFIELD.

CHAP. I.

The description of the family of Wakefield, in which a kindred likeness prevails as well of minds as of persons.

I WAS ever of opinion, that the honest man who married and brought up a large family, did more service than he who continued single and only talked of population. From this motive, I had scarcely taken orders a year before I began to think seriously of matrimony, and chose my wife as she did her wedding-gown, not for a fine glossy surface, but such qualities as would wear well. To do her justice, she was a good-natured notable woman; and as for breeding, there were few country ladies who could shew more. She could read any English book without much spelling; but for pickling, preserving, and cookery, none could excel her. She prided herself also upon being an excellent contriver in housekeeping; though I could never find that we grew richer with all her contrivances.

However, we loved each other tenderly, and our fondness increased as we grew old. There was in fact nothing that could make us angry with the world or each other. We had an elegant house, situated in a fine country, and a good neighbourhood. The

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year was spent in moral or rural amusements, in visiting our rich neighbours, and relieving such as were poor. We had no revolutions to fear, nor fatigues to undergo; all our adventures were by the fire-side, and all our migrations from the blue bed to the brown.

As we lived near the road, we often had the traveller or stranger visit us to taste our gooseberry-wine, for which we had great reputation; and I profess with the veracity of an historian, that I never knew one of them find fault with it. Our cousins too, even to the fortieth remove, all remembered their affinity, without any help from the heralds' office, and came very frequently to see us. Some of them did us no great honour by these claims of kindred; as we had the blind, the maimed, and the halt, amongst the number. However, my wife always insisted that, as they were the same *flesh and blood*, they should sit with us at the same table. So that, if we had not very rich, we generally had very happy, friends about us; for this remark will hold good through life, that the poorer the guest, the better pleased he ever is with being treated: and as some men gaze with admiration at the colours of a tulip, or the wing of a butterfly, so I was by nature an admirer of happy human faces. However, when any one of our relations was found to be a person of very bad character, a troublesome guest, or one we desired to get rid of, upon his leaving my house, I ever took care to lend him a riding-coat, or a pair of boots, or sometimes an horse of small value, and I always had the satisfaction of finding he never came back to return them. By this the house was cleared of such as we did not like; but never was the family of Wakefield known to turn the traveller, or the poor dependant, out of doors.

Thus we lived several years in a state of much happiness; not but that we sometimes had those little rubs which Providence sends to enhance the value of

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its favours. My orchard was often robbed by school-boys, and my wife's custards plundered by the cats or the children. The 'Squire would sometimes fall asleep in the most pathetic parts of my sermon, or his lady return my wife's civilities at church with a mutilated courtesy. But we soon got over the uneasiness caused by such accidents, and usually in three or four days began to wonder how they vexed us.

My children, the offspring of temperance, as they were educated without softness, so they were at once well formed and healthy; my sons hardy and active, my daughters beautiful and blooming. When I stood in the midst of the little circle, which promised to be the supports of my declining age, I could not avoid repeating the famous story of Count Abensberg, who, in Henry II.'s progress through Germany, while other courtiers came with their treasures, brought his thirty-two children, and presented them to his sovereign as the most valuable offering he had to bestow. In this manner, though I had but six, I considered them as a very valuable present made to my country, and consequently looked upon it as my debtor. Our eldest son was named George, after his uncle, who left us ten thousand pounds. Our second child, a girl, I intended to call after her aunt Grissel; but my wife, who during her pregnancy had been reading romances, insisted upon her being called Olivia. In less than another year we had another daughter, and now I was determined that Grissel should be her name; but a rich relation taking a fancy to stand godmother, the girl was, by her directions, called Sophia: so that we had two romantic names in the family; but I solemnly protest I had no hand in it. Moses was our next, and after an interval of twelve years we had two sons more.

It would be fruitless to deny exultation when I saw my little ones about me; but the vanity and the

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satisfaction of my wife were even greater than mine. When our visitors would say, "Well, upon my "word, Mrs. Primrose, you have the finest children "in the whole country."—"Ay, neighbour," she would answer, "they are as heaven made them, "handsome enough, if they be good enough; for "handsome is that handsome does." And then she would bid the girls hold up their heads; who, to conceal nothing, were certainly very handsome. Mere outside is so very trifling a circumstance with me, that I should scarcely have remembered to mention it, had it not been a general topic of conversation in the country. Olivia, now about eighteen, had that luxuriancy of beauty with which painters generally draw Hebe; open, sprightly and commanding. Sophia's features were not so striking at first; but often did more certain execution; for they were soft, modest, and alluring. The one vanquished by a single blow, the other by efforts successfully repeated.

The temper of a woman is generally formed from the turn of her features, at least it was so with my daughters. Olivia wished for many lovers, Sophia to secure one. Olivia was often affected from too great a desire to please. Sophia even repressed excellence from her fears to offend. The one entertained me with her vivacity when I was gay, the other with her sense when I was serious. But these qualities were never carried to excess in either, and I have often seen them exchange characters for a whole day together. A suit of mourning has transformed my coquette into a prude, and a new set of ribands has given her younger sister more than natural vivacity. My eldest son, George, was bred at Oxford, as I intended him for one of the learned professions. My second boy, Moses, whom I designed for business, received a sort of a miscellaneous education at home. But it is needless to attempt describing the particular characters of young people

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that had seen but very little of the world. In short, a family likeness prevailed through all; and, properly speaking, they had but one character, that of being all equally generous, credulous, simple, and inoffensive.

CHAP. II.

Family misfortunes. The loss of fortune only serves to increase the pride of the worthy.

THE temporal concerns of our family were chiefly committed to my wife's management; as to the spiritual, I took them entirely under my own direction. The profits of my living, which amounted to but thirty-five pounds a year, I made over to the orphans and widows of the clergy of our diocese; for, having a fortune of my own, I was careless of temporalities, and felt a secret pleasure in doing my duty without reward. I also set a resolution of keeping no curate, and of being acquainted with every man in the parish, exhorting the married men to temperance, and the bachelors to matrimony; so that in a few years it was a common saying, that there were three strange wants at Wakefield, a parson wanting pride, young men wanting wives, and ale-houses wanting customers.

Matrimony was always one of my favourite topics, and I wrote several sermons to prove its happiness: but there was a peculiar tenet which I made a point of supporting; for I maintained with Whiston, that it was unlawful for a priest of the church of England, after the death of his first wife, to take a second, or,

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to express it in one word, I valued myself upon being a strict monogamist.

I was early initiated into this important dispute, on which so many laborious volumes have been written. I published some tracts upon the subject myself, which, as they never sold, I have the consolation of thinking are read only by the happy *Few*. Some of my friends called this my weak side; but alas! they had not like me made it the subject of long contemplation. The more I reflected upon it, the more important it appeared; I even went a step beyond Whiston in displaying my principles: as he had engraven upon his wife's tomb that she was the *only* wife of William Whiston; so I wrote a similar epitaph for my wife, though still living, in which I extolled her prudence, œconomy, and obedience, till death; and having got it copied fair, with an elegant frame, it was placed over the chimney-piece, where it answered several very useful purposes. It admonished my wife of her duty to me, and my fidelity to her; it inspired her with a passion for fame, and constantly put her in mind of her end.

It was thus, perhaps, from hearing marriage so often recommended, that my eldest son, just upon leaving college, fixed his affections upon the daughter of a neighbouring clergyman, who was a dignitary in the church, and in circumstances to give her a large fortune: but fortune was her smallest accomplishment. Miss Arabella Wilmot was allowed by all (except my two daughters) to be completely pretty. Her youth, health, and innocence, were still heightened by a complexion so transparent, and such an happy sensibility of look, as even age could not gaze on with indifference. As Mr. Wilmot knew that I could make a very handsome settlement on my son, he was not averse to the match; so both families lived together in all that harmony which generally precedes an expected alliance. Being

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convinced by experience that the days of courtship are the most happy of our lives, I was willing enough to lengthen the period; and the various amusements which the young couple every day shared in each other's company, seemed to increase their passion. We were generally awaked in the morning by music, and on fine days rode a hunting. The hours between breakfast and dinner the ladies devoted to dress and study: they usually read a page, and then gazed at themselves in the glass, which even philosophers might own often presented the page of greatest beauty. At dinner my wife took the lead; for as she always insisted upon carving every thing herself, it being her mother's way, she gave us upon these occasions the history of every dish. When we had dined, to prevent the ladies leaving us, I generally ordered the table to be removed; and sometimes, with the music-master's assistance, the girls would give us a very agreeable concert. Walking out, drinking tea, country-dances, and forfeits, shortened the rest of the day, without the assistance of cards, as I hated all manner of gaming, except backgammon, at which my old friend and I sometimes took a two-penny hit. Nor can I here pass over an ominous circumstance that happened the last time we played together: I only wanted to fling a quatre, and yet I threw deuce-ace five times running.

Some months were elapsed in this manner, till at last it was thought convenient to fix a day for the nuptials of the young couple, who seemed earnestly to desire it. During the preparations for the wedding, I need not describe the busy importance of my wife, nor the sly looks of my daughters: in fact, my attention was fixed on another object, the completing a tract which I intended shortly to publish in defence of my favourite principle. As I looked upon this as a master-piece, both for argument and style, I could not in the pride of my heart avoid shewing

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it to my old friend Mr. Wilmot, as I made no doubt of receiving his approbation; but not till too late I discovered that he was most violently attached to the contrary opinion, and with good reason; for he was at that time actually courting a fourth wife. This, as may be expected, produced a dispute attended with some acrimony, which threatened to interrupt our intended alliance: but on the day before that appointed for the ceremony, we agreed to discuss the subject at large.

It was managed with proper spirit on both sides: he asserted that I was heterodox, I retorted the charge: he replied, and I rejoined. In the mean time, while the controversy was hottest, I was called out by one of my relations, who, with a face of concern, advised me to give up the dispute, at least till my son's wedding was over. "How!" cried I, "relinquish the "cause of truth, and let him be an husband, already "driven to the very verge of absurdity! You might "as well advise me to give up my fortune, as my "argument." "Your fortune," returned my friend, "I am now sorry to inform you, is almost nothing. "The merchant in town, in whose hands your money "was lodged, has gone off, to avoid a statute of "bankruptcy, and is thought not to have left a "shilling in the pound. I was unwilling to shock "you or the family with the account till after the "wedding: but now it may serve to moderate your "warmth in the argument; for, I suppose, your own "prudence will enforce the necessity of dissembling, "at least till your son has the young lady's fortune "secure." —— "Well," returned I, "if what you "tell me be true, and if I am to be a beggar, it "shall never make me a rascal, or induce me to dis-"avow my principles. I'll go this moment and "inform the company of my circumstances; and "as for the argument, I even here retract my former "concessions in the old gentleman's favour, nor will

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" I allow him now to be an husband in any sense of " the expression."

It would be endless to describe the different sensations of both families when I divulged the news of our misfortune; but what others felt was slight to what the lovers appeared to endure. Mr. Wilmot, who seemed before sufficiently inclined to break off the match, was by this blow soon determined: one virtue he had in perfection, which was prudence, too often the only one that is left us at seventy-two.

CHAP. III.

A migration. The fortunate circumstances of our lives are generally found at last to be of our own procuring.

THE only hope of our family now was, that the report of our misfortune might be malicious or premature: but a letter from my agent in town soon came with a confirmation of every particular. The loss of fortune to myself alone would have been trifling; the only uneasiness I felt was for my family, who were to be humble without an education to render them callous to contempt.

Near a fortnight had passed before I attempted to restrain their affliction; for premature consolation is but the remembrancer of sorrow. During this interval, my thoughts were employed on some future means of supporting them; and at last a small Cure of fifteen pounds a year was offered me in a distant neighbourhood, where I could still enjoy my principles without molestation. With this proposal I

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joyfully closed, having determined to increase my salary by managing a little farm.

Having taken this resolution, my next care was to get together the wrecks of my fortune; and, all debts collected and paid, out of fourteen thousand pounds we had but four hundred remaining. My chief attention therefore was now to bring down the pride of my family to their circumstances; for I well knew that aspiring beggary is wretchedness itself. "You "cannot be ignorant, my children," cried I, "that "no prudence of ours could have prevented our late "misfortune; but prudence may do much in dis-"appointing its effects. We are now poor, my fond-"lings, and wisdom bids us conform to our humble "situation. Let us then, without repining, give up "those splendours with which numbers are wretched, "and seek in humbler circumstances that peace with "which all may be happy. The poor live pleasantly "without our help, why then should not we learn "to live without theirs? No, my children, let us "from this moment give up all pretensions to gen-"tility; we have still enough left for happiness if "we are wise, and let us draw upon content for the "deficiencies of fortune."

As my eldest son was bred a scholar, I determined to send him to town, where his abilities might contribute to our support and his own. The separation of friends and families is, perhaps, one of the most distressful circumstances attendant on penury. The day soon arrived on which we were to disperse for the first time. My son, after taking leave of his mother and the rest, who mingled their tears with their kisses, came to ask a blessing from me. This I gave him from my heart, and which, added to five guineas, was all the patrimony I had now to bestow. "You are going, my boy," cried I, "to London on "foot, in the manner Hooker, your great ancestor, "travelled there before you. Take from me the

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" same horse that was given him by the good bishop " Jewel, this staff, and take this book too, it will be " your comfort on the way: these two lines in it are " worth a million, *I have been young, and now am* " *old; yet never saw I the righteous man forsaken,* " *or his seed begging their bread.* Let this be your " consolation as you travel on. Go, my boy; what- " ever be thy fortune let me see thee once a year; " still keep a good heart, and farewell." As he was possessed of integrity and honour, I was under no apprehensions from throwing him naked into the amphitheatre of life; for I knew he would act a good part whether vanquished or victorious.

His departure only prepared the way for our own, which arrived a few days afterwards. The leaving a neighbourhood in which we had enjoyed so many hours of tranquillity, was not without a tear which scarcely fortitude itself could suppress. Besides, a journey of seventy miles to a family that had hitherto never been above ten from home, filled us with apprehension, and the cries of the poor, who followed us for some miles, contributed to increase it. The first day's journey brought us in safety within thirty miles of our future retreat, and we put up for the night at an obscure inn in a village by the way. When we were shewn a room, I desired the landlord, in my usual way, to let us have his company, with which he complied, as what he drank would increase the bill next morning. He knew, however, the whole neighbourhood to which I was removing, particularly 'Squire Thornhill, who was to be my landlord, and who lived within a few miles of the place. This gentleman he described as one who desired to know little more of the world than its pleasures, being particularly remarkable for his attachment to the fair sex. He observed that no virtue was able to resist his arts and assiduity, and that scarcely a farmer's daughter within ten miles round but what

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had found him successful and faithless. Though this account gave me some pain, it had a very different effect upon my daughters, whose features seemed to brighten with the expectation of an approaching triumph; nor was my wife less pleased and confident of their allurements and virtue. While our thoughts were thus employed, the hostess entered the room to inform her husband, that the strange gentleman, who had been two days in the house, wanted money, and could not satisfy them for his reckoning. "Want money!" replied the host, "that "must be impossible; for it was no later than yes- "terday he paid three guineas to our beadle to spare "an old broken soldier that was to be whipped "through the town for dog-stealing." The hostess, however, still persisting in her first assertion, he was preparing to leave the room, swearing that he would be satisfied one way or another, when I begged the landlord would introduce me to a stranger of so much charity as he described. With this he complied, shewing-in a gentleman who seemed to be about thirty, dressed in clothes that once were laced. His person was well formed, and his face marked with the lines of thinking. He had something short and dry in his address, and seemed not to understand ceremony, or to despise it. Upon the landlord's leaving the room, I could not avoid expressing my concern to the stranger at seeing a gentleman in such circumstances, and offered him my purse to satisfy the present demand. "I take it with all "my heart, Sir," replied he, "and am glad that a "late oversight in giving what money I had about "me, has shewn me that there are still some men "like you. I must, however, previously intreat "being informed of the name and residence of my "benefactor, in order to repay him as soon as pos- "sible." In this I satisfied him fully, not only mentioning my name and late misfortunes, but the place

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to which I was going to remove. "This," cried he, "happens still more luckily than I hoped for, as I "am going the same way myself, having been de- "tained here two days by the floods, which, I hope, "by to-morrow will be found passable." I testified the pleasure I should have in his company, and, my wife and daughters joining in intreaty, he was prevailed upon to stay supper. The stranger's conversation, which was at once pleasing and instructive, induced me to wish for a continuance of it; but it was now high time to retire and take refreshment against the fatigues of the following day.

The next morning we all set forward together: my family on horseback, while Mr. Burchell, our new companion, walked along the foot-path by the road-side, observing with a smile, that, as we were ill mounted, he would be too generous to attempt leaving us behind. As the floods were not yet subsided, we were obliged to hire a guide, who trotted on before, Mr. Burchell and I bringing up the rear. We lightened the fatigues of the road with philosophical disputes, which he seemed to understand perfectly. But what surprised me most was, that though he was a money-borrower, he defended his opinions with as much obstinacy as if he had been my patron. He now and then also informed me to whom the different seats belonged that lay in our view as we travelled the road. "That," cried he, pointing to a very magnificent house which stood at some distance, "belongs to Mr. Thornhill, a young gentleman who "enjoys a large fortune, though entirely dependant "on the will of his uncle, Sir William Thornhill, a "gentleman, who, content with a little himself, per- "mits his nephew to enjoy the rest, and chiefly re- "sides in town." "What!" cried I, "is my young "landlord then the nephew of a man whose virtues, "generosity, and singularities, are so universally "known? I have heard Sir William Thornhill

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" represented as one of the most generous, yet whim-
" sical men in the kingdom; a man of consummate
" benevolence."——" Something, perhaps, too much
" so," replied Mr. Burchell, at least he carried bene-
" volence to an excess when young; for his passions
" were then strong, and as they were all upon the
" side of virtue, they led it up to a romantic ex-
" treme. He early began to aim at the qualifica-
" tions of the soldier and scholar; was soon distin-
" guished in the army, and had some reputation
" among men of learning. Adulation ever follows
" the ambitious; for such alone receive most pleasure
" from flattery. He was surrounded with crowds,
" who shewed him only one side of their character;
" so that he began to lose a regard for private in-
" terest in universal sympathy. He loved all man-
" kind; for fortune prevented him from knowing
" that there were rascals. Physicians tell us of a
" disorder in which the whole body is so exquisitely
" sensible, that the slightest touch gives pain: what
" some have thus suffered in their persons, this gen-
" tleman felt in his mind. The slightest distress,
" whether real or fictitious, touched him to the
" quick, and his soul laboured under a sickly sensi-
" bility of the miseries of others. Thus disposed
" to relieve, it will be easily conjectured, he found
" numbers disposed to solicit: his profusions began to
" impair his fortune, but not his good-nature; that,
" indeed, was seen to increase as the other seemed to
" decay: he grew improvident as he grew poor; and
" though he talked like a man of sense, his actions
" were those of a fool. Still, however, being sur-
" rounded with importunity, and no longer able to
" satisfy every request that was made him, instead
" of *money* he gave *promises*. They were all he
" had to bestow, and he had not resolution enough
" to give any man pain by a denial. By this he
" drew round him crowds of dependants, whom he

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" was sure to disappoint, yet wished to relieve. " These hung upon him for a time, and left him " with merited reproaches and contempt. But, in " proportion as he became contemptible to others, he " became despicable to himself. His mind had leaned " upon their adulation, and, that support taken away, " he could find no pleasure in the applause of his " heart, which he had never learned to reverence. The " world now began to wear a different aspect; the " flattery of his friends began to dwindle into simple " approbation. Approbation soon took the more " friendly form of advice, and advice when rejected " produced their reproaches. He now therefore found " that such friends as benefits had gathered round " him, were little estimable: he now found that a " man's own heart must be ever given to gain that " of another. I now found, that——that——I forget " what I was going to observe:—in short, Sir, he " resolved to respect himself, and laid down a plan of " restoring his falling fortune. For this purpose, in " his own whimsical manner, he travelled through " Europe on foot, and now, though he has scarcely " attained the age of thirty, his circumstances are " more affluent than ever. At present, his bounties " are more rational and moderate than before; but " still he preserves the character of an humourist, and " finds most pleasure in eccentric virtues."

My attention was so much taken up by Mr. Burchell's account, that I scarcely looked forward as he went along, till we were alarmed by the cries of my family, when turning, I perceived my youngest daughter in the midst of a rapid stream, thrown from her horse, and struggling with the torrent. She had sunk twice, nor was it in my power to disengage myself in time to bring her relief. My sensations were even too violent to permit my attempting her rescue: she must have certainly perished had not my companion, perceiving her danger, instantly plunged

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in to her relief, and, with some difficulty, brought her in safety to the opposite shore. By taking the current a little farther up, the rest of the family got safely over; where we had an opportunity of joining our acknowledgments to her's. Her gratitude may be more readily imagined than described: she thanked her deliverer more with looks than words, and continued to lean upon his arm, as if still willing to receive assistance. My wife also hoped one day to have the pleasure of returning his kindness at her own house. Thus, after we were refreshed at the next inn, and had dined together, as Mr. Burchell was going to a different part of the country, he took leave; and we pursued our journey: my wife observing as he went, that she liked him extremely, and protesting, that if he had birth and fortune to entitle him to match into such a family as our's, she knew no man she would sooner fix upon. I could not but smile to hear her talk in this lofty strain; but I was never much displeased with those harmless delusions that tend to make us more happy.

CHAP. IV.

A proof that even the humblest fortune may grant happiness, which depends not on circumstances but constitution.

THE place of our retreat was in a little neighbourhood, consisting of farmers, who tilled their own grounds, and were equal strangers to opulence and poverty. As they had almost all the conveniences of life within themselves, they seldom visited towns or cities in search of superfluity.

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Remote from the polite, they still retained the primæval simplicity of manners; and frugal by habit, they scarcely knew that temperance was a virtue. They wrought with cheerfulness on days of labour; but observed festivals as intervals of idleness and pleasure. They kept up the Christmas carol, sent true love knots on Valentine morning, eat pancakes on Shrove-tide, shewed their wit on the first of April, and religiously cracked nuts on Michaelmas eve. Being apprised of our approach, the whole neighbourhood came out to meet their minister, dressed in their finest clothes, and preceded by a pipe and tabor: A feast also was provided for our reception, at which we sate cheerfully down; and what the conversation wanted in wit, was made up in laughter.

Our little habitation was situated at the foot of a sloping hill, sheltered with a beautiful underwood behind, and a prattling river before: on one side a meadow, on the other a green. My farm consisted of about twenty acres of excellent land, having given an hundred pound for my predecessor's good-will. Nothing could exceed the neatness of my little enclosures: the elms and hedge-rows appearing with inexpressible beauty. My house consisted of but one story, and was covered with thatch, which gave it an air of great snugness; the walls on the inside were nicely white-washed, and my daughters undertook to adorn them with pictures of their own designing. Though the same room served us for parlour and kitchen, that only made it the warmer. Besides, as it was kept with the utmost neatness, the dishes, plates, and coppers, being well scoured, and all disposed in bright rows on the shelves, the eye was agreeably relieved, and did not want richer furniture. There were three other apartments, one for my wife and me, another for our two daughters, within our own, and the third, with two beds, for the rest of the children.

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The little republic to which I gave laws, was regulated in the following manner: by sun-rise we all assembled in our common apartment; the fire being previously kindled by the servant. After we had saluted each other with proper ceremony, for I always thought fit to keep up some mechanical forms of good breeding, without which freedom ever destroys friendship, we all bent in gratitude to that Being who gave us another day. This duty being performed, my son and I went to pursue our usual industry abroad, while my wife and daughters employed themselves in providing breakfast, which was always ready at a certain time. I allowed half an hour for this meal, and an hour for dinner; which time was taken up in innocent mirth between my wife and daughters, and in philosophical arguments between my son and me.

As we rose with the sun, so we never pursued our labours after it was gone down, but returned home to the expecting family; where smiling looks, a neat hearth, and pleasant fire, were prepared for our reception. Nor were we without guests: sometimes farmer Flamborough, our talkative neighbour, and often the blind piper would pay us a visit, and taste our gooseberry wine; for the making of which we had lost neither the receipt nor the reputation. These harmless people had several ways of being good company; while one played, the other would sing some soothing ballad, Johnny Armstrong's last good night, or the cruelty of Barbara Allen. The night was concluded in the manner we began the morning, my youngest boys being appointed to read the lessons of the day, and he that read loudest, distinctest, and best, was to have an halfpenny on Sunday to put in the poor's box.

When Sunday came, it was indeed a day of finery, which all my sumptuary edicts could not restrain. How well soever I fancied my lectures against pride

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had conquered the vanity of my daughters; yet I still found them secretly attached to all their former finery: they still loved laces, ribands, bugles, and catgut; my wife herself retained a passion for her crimson paduasoy, because I formerly happened to say it became her.

The first Sunday, in particular, their behaviour served to mortify me: I had desired my girls the preceding night to be dressed early the next day; for I always loved to be at church a good while before the rest of the congregation. They punctually obeyed my directions; but when we were to assemble in the morning at breakfast, down came my wife and daughters, dressed out in all their former splendour: their hair plastered up with pomatum, their faces patched to taste, their trains bundled up in an heap behind, and rustling at every motion. I could not help smiling at their vanity, particularly that of my wife, from whom I expected more discretion. In this exigence, therefore, my only resource was to order my son, with an important air, to call our coach. The girls were amazed at the command; but I repeated it with more solemnity than before. ——"Surely, my dear, you jest," cried my wife, "we can walk it perfectly well: we want no coach "to carry us now." "You mistake, child," returned I, "we do want a coach; for if we walk to church "in this trim, the very children in the parish will "hoot after us."——"Indeed," replied my wife, "I always imagined that my Charles was fond of "seeing his children neat and handsome about him." —"You may be as neat as you please," interrupted I, "and I shall love you the better for it; but all "this is not neatness, but frippery. These rufflings, "and pinkings, and patchings, will only make us "hated by all the wives of all our neighbours. No, "my children," continued I, more gravely, "those "gowns may be altered into something of a plainer

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"cut; for finery is very unbecoming in us, who "want the means of decency. I do not know "whether such flouncing and shredding is becoming "even in the rich, if we consider, upon a moderate "calculation, that the nakedness of the indigent "world may be clothed from the trimmings of the "vain."

This remonstrance had the proper effect; they went with great composure, that very instant, to change their dress; and the next day I had the satisfaction of finding my daughters, at their own request, employed in cutting up their trains into Sunday waistcoats for Dick and Bill, the two little ones, and what was still more satisfactory, the gowns seemed improved by this curtailing.

CHAP. V.

A new and great acquaintance introduced.—What we place most hopes upon, generally proves most fatal.

At a small distance from the house my predecessor had made a seat, overshaded by an hedge of hawthorn and honeysuckle. Here, when the weather was fine and our labour soon finished, we usually sat together, to enjoy an extensive landscape, in the calm of the evening. Here too we drank tea, which was now become an occasional banquet; and as we had it but seldom, it diffused a new joy, the preparations for it being made with no small share of bustle and ceremony. On these occasions our

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two little ones always read to us, and they were regularly served after we had done. Sometimes, to give a variety to our amusements, the girls sung to the guitar; and while they thus formed a little concert, my wife and I would stroll down the sloping field, that was embellished with blue bells and centaury, talk of our children with rapture, and enjoy the breeze that wafted both health and harmony.

In this manner we began to find that every situation in life might bring its own peculiar pleasures: every morning waked us to a repetition of toil; but the evening repaid it with vacant hilarity.

It was about the beginning of autumn, on a holiday, for I kept such as intervals of relaxation from labour, that I had drawn out my family to our usual place of amusement, and our young musicians began their usual concert. As we were thus engaged, we saw a stag bound nimbly by, within about twenty paces of where we were sitting, and by its panting it seemed pressed by the hunters. We had not much time to reflect upon the poor animal's distress, when we perceived the dogs and horsemen come sweeping along at some distance behind, and making the very path it had taken. I was instantly for returning in with my family; but either curiosity or surprise, or some more hidden motive, held my wife and daughters to their seats. The huntsman, who rode foremost, passed us with great swiftness, followed by four or five persons more, who seemed in equal haste. At last, a young gentleman of a more genteel appearance than the rest, came forward, and for a while regarding us, instead of pursuing the chace, stopped short, and giving his horse to a servant who attended, approached us with a careless superior air. He seemed to want no introduction, but was going to salute my daughters as one certain of a kind reception; but they had early learned the lesson of

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looking presumption out of countenance. Upon which he let us know his name was Thornhill, and that he was owner of the estate that lay for some extent round us. He again therefore offered to salute the female part of the family; and such was the power of fortune and fine clothes, that he found no second repulse. As his address, though confident, was easy, we soon became more familiar; and perceiving musical instruments lying near, he begged to be favoured with a song. As I did not approve of such disproportioned acquaintances, I winked upon my daughters in order to prevent their compliance; but my hint was counteracted by one from their mother; so that, with a cheerful air, they gave us a favourite song of Dryden's. Mr. Thornhill seemed highly delighted with their performance and choice, and then took up the guitar himself. He played but very indifferently; however, my eldest daughter repaid his former applause with interest, and assured him that his tones were louder than even those of her master. At this compliment he bowed, which she returned with a courtesy. He praised her taste, and she commended his understanding: an age could not have made them better acquainted. While the fond mother, too, equally happy, insisted upon her landlord's stepping in, and tasting a glass of her gooseberry. The whole family seemed earnest to please him: my girls attempted to entertain him with topics they thought most modern, while Moses, on the contrary, gave him a question or two from the ancients, for which he had the satisfaction of being laughed at: my little ones were no less busy, and fondly stuck close to the stranger. All my endeavours could scarcely keep their dirty fingers from handling and tarnishing the lace on his clothes, and lifting up the flaps of his pocket-holes, to see what was there. At the approach of evening he took leave; but not till he had requested permission to

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renew his visit, which, as he was our landlord, we most readily agreed to.

As soon as he was gone, my wife called a council on the conduct of the day. She was of opinion, that it was a most fortunate hit; for that she had known even stranger things at last brought to bear. She hoped again to see the day in which we might hold up our heads with the best of them; and concluded, she protested she could see no reason why the two Miss Wrinkles should marry great fortunes, and her children get none. As this last argument was directed to me, I protested I could see no reason for it neither, nor why Mr. Simkins got the ten thousand pound prize in the lottery, and we sate down with a blank. "I protest, Charles," cried my wife, "this is the "way you always damp my girls and me when we "are in spirits. Tell me, Sophy, my dear, what do "you think of our new visitor? Don't you think "he seemed to be good-natured?"—"Immensely "so indeed, mamma," replied she. "I think he "has a great deal to say upon every thing, and is "never at a loss; and the more trifling the subject, "the more he has to say."—"Yes," cried Olivia, "he is well enough for a man; but for my part, I "don't much like him, he is so extremely impudent "and familiar; but on the guitar he is shocking." These two last speeches I interpreted by contraries. I found by this, that Sophia internally despised, as much as Olivia secretly admired him.——"Whatever may be your opinions of him, my children," cried I, "to confess a truth, he has not prepossessed "me in his favour. Disproportioned friendships "ever terminate in disgust; and I thought, notwithstanding all his ease, that he seemed perfectly "sensible of the distance between us. Let us keep "to companions of our own rank. There is no "character more contemptible than a man that is "a fortune-hunter; and I can see no reason why

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"fortune-hunting women should not be contemptible "too. Thus, at best, we shall be contemptible if his "views be honourable; but if they be otherwise! I "should shudder but to think of that! It is true "I have no apprehensions from the conduct of my "children, but I think there are some from his cha- "racter."—I would have proceeded, but for the interruption of a servant from the 'Squire, who, with his compliments, sent us a side of venison, and a promise to dine with us some days after. This well-timed present pleaded more powerfully in his favour, than any thing I had to say could obviate. I therefore continued silent, satisfied with just having pointed out danger, and leaving it to their own discretion to avoid it. That virtue which requires to be ever guarded, is scarcely worth the sentinel.

CHAP. VI.

The happiness of a country fire-side.

As we carried on the former dispute with some degree of warmth, in order to accommodate matters, it was universally agreed, that we should have a part of the venison for supper, and the girls undertook the task with alacrity. "I am sorry," cried I, "that "we have no neighbour or stranger to take a part "in this good cheer: feasts of this kind acquire a "double relish from hospitality."—"Bless me," cried my wife, "here comes our good friend Mr. "Burchell, that saved our Sophia, and that run you "down fairly in the argument."—"Confute me in "argument, child!" cried I. "You mistake there, "my dear. I believe there are but few that can do

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"that: I never dispute your abilities at making a "goose-pye, and I beg you'll leave argument to me." —As I spoke, poor Mr. Burchell entered the house, and was welcomed by the family, who shook him heartily by the hand, while little Dick officiously reached him a chair.

I was pleased with the poor man's friendship for two reasons: because I knew that he wanted mine, and I knew him to be friendly as far as he was able. He was known in our neighbourhood by the character of the poor Gentleman that would do no good when he was young, though he was not yet thirty. He would at intervals talk with great good sense; but in general he was fondest of the company of children, whom he used to call harmless little men. He was famous, I found, for singing them ballads, and telling them stories; and seldom went out without something in his pockets for them, a piece of gingerbread, or an halfpenny whistle. He generally came for a few days into our neighbourhood once a year, and lived upon the neighbours hospitality. He sate down to supper among us, and my wife was not sparing of her gooseberry wine. The tale went round; he sung us old songs, and gave the children the story of the Buck of Beverland, with the history of Patient Grissel, the adventures of Catskin, and then Fair Rosamond's Bower. Our cock, which always crew at eleven, now told us it was time for repose; but an unforeseen difficulty started about lodging the stranger: all our beds were already taken up, and it was too late to send him to the next alehouse. In this dilemma, little Dick offered him his part of the bed, if his brother Moses would let him lie with him; "And I," cried Bill, "will give Mr. Burchell "my part, if my sisters will take me to theirs." —"Well done, my good children," cried I, "hos- "pitality is one of the first Christian duties. The "beast retires to its shelter, and the bird flies to its

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"nest; but helpless man can only find refuge from "his fellow-creature. The greatest stranger in this "world, was he that came to save it. He never "had an house, as if willing to see what hospitality "was left remaining amongst us. Deborah, my dear," cried I, to my wife, "give those boys a lump of sugar "each, and let Dick's be the largest, because he spoke "first."

In the morning early I called out my whole family to help at saving an after-growth of hay, and our guest offering his assistance, he was accepted among the number. Our labours went on lightly, we turned the swath to the wind, I went foremost, and the rest followed in due succession. I could not avoid, however, observing the assiduity of Mr. Burchell in assisting my daughter Sophia in her part of the task. When he had finished his own, he would join in her's, and enter into a close conversation: but I had too good an opinion of Sophia's understanding, and was too well convinced of her ambition, to be under any uneasiness from a man of broken fortune. When we were finished for the day, Mr. Burchell was invited as on the night before; but he refused, as he was to lie that night at a neighbour's, to whose child he was carrying a whistle. When gone, our conversation at supper turned upon our late unfortunate guest. "What a strong instance," said I, "is that "poor man of the miseries attending a youth of "levity and extravagance. He by no means wants "sense, which only serves to aggravate his former "folly. Poor forlorn creature, where are now the "revellers, the flatterers, that he could once inspire "and command! Gone, perhaps, to attend the "bagnio pander, grown rich by his extravagance. "They once praised him, and now they applaud the "pander: their former raptures at his wit are now "converted into sarcasms at his folly: he is poor, "and perhaps deserves poverty; for he has neither

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"the ambition to be independent, nor the skill to "be useful." Prompted perhaps by some secret reasons, I delivered this observation with too much acrimony, which my Sophia gently reproved. "Whatsoever his former conduct may have been, Papa, "his circumstances should exempt him from censure "now. His present indigence is a sufficient punishment for former folly; and I have heard my papa "himself say, that we should never strike our unnecessary blow at a victim over whom Providence "holds the scourge of its resentment."—"You are "right, Sophy," cried my son Moses, "and one of "the ancients finely represents so malicious a conduct, by the attempts of a rustic to flay Marsyas, "whose skin, the fable tells us, had been wholly "stripped off by another. Besides, I don't know if "this poor man's situation be so bad as my father "would represent it. We are not to judge of the "feelings of others by what we might feel if in their "place. However dark the habitation of the mole "to our eyes, yet the animal itself finds the apartment sufficiently lightsome. And to confess a "truth, this man's mind seems fitted to his station; "for I never heard any one more sprightly than he "was to-day, when he conversed with you."—This was said without the least design; however it excited a blush, which she strove to cover by an affected laugh, assuring him, that she scarcely took any notice of what he said to her; but that she believed he might once have been a very fine gentleman. The readiness with which she undertook to vindicate herself, and her blushing, were symptoms I did not internally approve; but I repressed my suspicions.

As we expected our landlord the next day, my wife went to make the venison pasty; Moses sate reading, while I taught the little ones: my daughters seemed equally busy with the rest; and I observed them for a good while cooking something over

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the fire. I at first supposed they were assisting their mother; but little Dick informed me in a whisper, that they were making a *wash* for the face. Washes of all kinds I had a natural antipathy to; for I knew that instead of mending the complexion they spoiled it. I therefore approached my chair by sly degrees to the fire, and grasping the poker, as if it wanted mending, seemingly by accident, overturned the whole composition, and it was too late to begin another.

CHAP. VII.

A town wit described. The dullest fellows may learn to be comical for a night or two.

When the morning arrived on which we were to entertain our young landlord, it may be easily supposed what provisions were exhausted to make an appearance. It may also be conjectured that my wife and daughters expanded their gayest plumage upon this occasion. Mr. Thornhill came with a couple of friends, his chaplain and feeder. The servants, who were numerous, he politely ordered to the next alehouse: but my wife, in the triumph of her heart, insisted on entertaining them all; for which, by the bye, our family was pinched for three weeks after. As Mr. Burchell had hinted to us the day before, that he was making some proposals of marriage to Miss Wilmot, my son George's former mistress, this a good deal damped the heartiness of his reception: but accident, in some measure, relieved our embarrassment; for one of the company happening to

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mention her name, Mr. Thornhill observed with an oath, that he never knew any thing more absurd than calling such a fright a beauty: "For strike me ugly," continued he, "if I should not find as much "pleasure in choosing my mistress by the information "of a lamp under the clock at St. Dunstan's." At this he laughed, and so did we:—the jests of the rich are ever successful. Olivia too could not avoid whispering loud enough to be heard, that he had an infinite fund of humour.

After dinner, I began with my usual toast, the Church; for this I was thanked by the chaplain, as he said the Church was the only mistress of his affections.——"Come tell us honestly, Frank," said the 'Squire, with his usual archness, "suppose the "Church, your present mistress, drest in lawn sleeves, "on one hand, and Miss Sophia, with no lawn "about her, on the other, which would you be for?" "For both, to be sure," cried the chaplain.—"Right, "Frank," cried the 'Squire; "for may this glass suf- "focate me but a fine girl is worth all the priest- "craft in the creation. For what are tithes and "tricks but an imposition, all a confounded impos- "ture, and I can prove it."——"I wish you would," cried my son Moses, "and I think," continued he, "that I should be able to answer you."—"Very "well, Sir," cried the 'Squire, who immediately smoked him, and winking on the rest of the company, to prepare us for the sport, "if you are for "a cool argument upon that subject, I am ready to "accept the challenge. And first, whether are you "for managing it analogically, or dialogically?" "I "am for managing it rationally," cried Moses, quite happy at being permitted to dispute. "Good again," cried the 'Squire, "and firstly of the first. I hope "you'll not deny that whatever is, is. If you don't "grant me that, I can go no further."——"Why," returned Moses, "I think I may grant that, and

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"make the best of it."—"I hope too," returned the other, "you'll grant that a part is less than the "whole." "I grant that too," cried Moses, "it "is but just and reasonable."——"I hope," cried the 'Squire, "you'll not deny, that the two angles of "a triangle are equal to two right ones."—"Nothing "can be plainer," returned t'other, and looked round with his usual importance.—"Very well," cried the 'Squire, speaking very quick, "the premises being "thus settled, I proceed to observe, that the con- "catenation of self-existences, proceeding in a reci- "procal duplicate ratio, naturally produce a proble- "matical dialogism, which in some measure proves "that the essence of spirituality may be referred to "the second predicable."——"Hold, hold," cried the other, "I deny that: Do you think I can "thus tamely submit to such heterodox doctrines?" —"What," replied the 'Squire, as if in a passion, "not submit! Answer me one plain question: Do "you think Aristotle right when he says, that re- "latives are related?" "Undoubtedly," replied the other. "If so then," cried the 'Squire, "answer "me directly to what I propose: Whether do you "judge the analytical investigation of the first part "of my enthymem deficient secundum quoad, or "quoad minus, and give me your reasons: give me "your reasons, I say, directly."——"I protest," cried Moses, "I don't rightly comprehend the force "of your reasoning; but if it be reduced to one simple "proposition, I fancy it may then have an answer." ——"O, Sir," cried the 'Squire, "I am your most "humble servant, I find you want me to furnish "you with argument and intellects too. No, Sir, "there I protest you are too hard for me." This effectually raised the laugh against poor Moses, who sate the only dismal figure in a group of merry faces: nor did he offer a single syllable more during the whole entertainment.

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But though all this gave me no pleasure, it had a very different effect upon Olivia, who mistook it for humour, though but a mere act of the memory. She thought him therefore a very fine gentleman; and such as consider what powerful ingredients a good figure, fine clothes, and fortune, are in that character, will easily forgive her. Mr. Thornhill, notwithstanding his real ignorance, talked with ease, and could expatiate upon the common topics of conversation with fluency. It is not surprising then that such talents should win the affections of a girl, who by education was taught to value an appearance in herself, and consequently to set a value upon it in another.

Upon his departure, we again entered into a debate upon the merits of our young landlord. As he directed his looks and conversation to Olivia, it was no longer doubted but that she was the object that induced him to be our visitor. Nor did she seem to be much displeased at the innocent raillery of her brother and sister upon this occasion. Even Deborah herself seemed to share the glory of the day, and exulted in her daughter's victory as if it were her own. "And now, my dear," cried she to me, "I'll "fairly own, that it was I that instructed my girls to "encourage our landlord's addresses. I had always "some ambition, and you now see that I was right; "for who knows how this may end?" "Aye, who "knows that indeed!" answered I, with a groan: "for my part I don't much like it; and I could "have been better pleased with one that was poor "and honest, than this fine gentleman with his for-"tune and infidelity; for depend on't, if he be what "I suspect him, no free-thinker shall ever have a "child of mine."

"Sure, father," cried Moses, "you are too severe "in this; for Heaven will never arraign him for what "he thinks, but for what he does. Every man has

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"a thousand vicious thoughts, which arise without his "power to suppress. Thinking freely of religion "may be involuntary with this gentleman: so that "allowing his sentiments to be wrong, yet as he is "purely passive in his assent, he is no more to be "blamed for his errors, than the governor of a city "without walls for the shelter he is obliged to afford "an invading enemy."

"True, my son," cried I; "but, if the governor "invites the enemy there, he is justly culpable. And "such is always the case with those who embrace "error. The vice does not lie in assenting to the "proofs they see; but in being blind to many of the "proofs that offer. So that, though our erroneous "opinions be involuntary when formed, yet as we "have been wilfully corrupt, or very negligent in "forming them, we deserve punishment for our vice, "or contempt for our folly."

My wife now kept up the conversation, though not the argument: she observed, that several very prudent men of our acquaintance were free-thinkers, and made very good husbands; and she knew some sensible girls that had skill enough to make converts of their spouses: "And who knows, my dear," continued she, "what Olivia may be able to do. The "girl has a great deal to say upon every subject, "and to my knowledge is very well skilled in con- "troversy."

"Why, my dear, what controversy can she have "read?" cried I. "It does not occur to me that "I ever put such books into her hands: you cer- "tainly over-rate her merit." "Indeed, papa," replied Olivia, "she does not: I have read a great "deal of controversy. I have read the disputes be- "tween Thwackum and Square; the controversy "between Robinson Crusoe and Friday the savage, "and I am now employed in reading the contro- "versy in Religious Courtship." — "Very well,"

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cried I, "that's a good girl, I find you are perfectly "qualified for making converts, and so go help your "mother to make the gooseberry-pye."

CHAP. VIII.

An amour, which promises little good fortune, yet may be productive of much.

THE next morning we were again visited by Mr. Burchell, though I began, for certain reasons, to be displeased with the frequency of his return; but I could not refuse him my company and my fire-side. It is true his labour more than requited his entertainment; for he wrought among us with vigour, and either in the meadow or at the hay-rick put himself foremost. Besides, he had always something amusing to say that lessened our toil, and was at once so out of the way, and yet so sensible, that I loved, laughed at, and pitied him. My only dislike arose from an attachment he discovered to my daughter: he would, in a jesting manner, call her his little mistress, and when he bought each of the girls a set of ribands, hers was the finest. I knew not how, but he every day seemed to become more amiable, his wit to improve, and his simplicity to assume the superior airs of wisdom.

Our family dined in the field, and we sate, or rather reclined, round a temperate repast, our cloth spread upon the hay, while Mr. Burchell gave cheerfulness to the feast. To heighten our satisfaction, two

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blackbirds answered each other from opposite hedges, the familiar red-breast came and pecked the crumbs from our hands, and every sound seemed but the echo of tranquillity. "I never sit thus," says Sophia, "but I think of the two lovers, so sweetly described "by Mr. Gay, who were struck dead in each other's "arms. There is something so pathetic in the de- "scription, that I have read it an hundred times with "new rapture."——"In my opinion," cried my son, "the finest strokes in that description are much below "those in the Acis and Galatea of Ovid. The Roman "poet understands the use of *contrast* better, and "upon that figure artfully managed all strength in "the pathetic depends."——"It is remarkable," cried Mr. Burchell, "that both the poets you mention "have equally contributed to introduce a false taste "into their respective countries, by loading all their "lines with epithet. Men of little genius found them "most easily imitated in their defects, and English "poetry, like that in the latter empire of Rome, is "nothing at present but a combination of luxuriant "images, without plot or connexion; a string of "epithets that improve the sound, without carrying "on the sense. But perhaps, madam, while I thus "reprehend others, you 'll think it just that I should "give them an opportunity to retaliate, and indeed I "have made this remark only to have an opportunity "of introducing to the company a ballad, which, "whatever be its other defects, is, I think, at least "free from those I have mentioned."*

* We have introduced this beautiful poem in this place, because it appears to be too intimately connected with the story, to be omitted with any propriety, though it is inserted in the next volume among the rest of the Doctor's poetical productions.

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A BALLAD.

I.

" TURN, gentle Hermit of the dale,
" And guide my lonely way,
" To where yon taper cheers the vale
" With hospitable ray.

II.

" For here forlorn and lost I tread,
" With fainting steps and slow;
" Where wilds, immeasurably spread,
" Seem length'ning as I go."

III.

" Forbear, my son," the Hermit cries,
" To tempt the dangerous gloom;
" For yonder faithless phantom flies
" To lure thee to thy doom.

IV.

" Here to the houseless child of want
" My door is open still;
" And though my portion is but scant,
" I give it with good will.

V.

" Then turn to-night, and freely share
" Whate'er my cell bestows;
" My rushy couch and frugal fare,
" My blessing and repose.

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VI.

" No flocks that range the valley free,
" To slaughter I condemn;
" Taught by that Power that pities me,
" I learn to pity them:

VII.

" But from the mountain's grassy side
" A guiltless feast I bring;
" A scrip with herbs and fruits supply'd,
" And water from the spring.

VIII.

" Then, pilgrim, turn, thy cares forego;
" All earth-born cares are wrong;
" Man wants but little here below,
" Nor wants that little long."

IX.

Soft as the dew from Heav'n descends,
His gentle accents fell:
The modest stranger lowly bends,
And follows to the cell.

X.

Far in a wilderness obscure
The lonely mansion lay,
A refuge to the neighb'ring poor
And strangers led astray.

XI.

No stores beneath its humble thatch
Requir'd a master's care;
The wicket, op'ning with a latch,
Receiv'd the harmless pair.

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XII.

And now, when busy crowds retire
To take their ev'ning rest,
The Hermit trimm'd his little fire,
And cheer'd his pensive guest:

XIII.

And spread his vegetable store,
And gaily press'd, and smil'd;
And skill'd in legendary lore
The ling'ring hours beguil'd,

XIV.

Around in sympathetic mirth
Its tricks the kitten tries,
The cricket chirrups in the hearth,
The crackling faggot flies.

XV.

But nothing could a charm impart
To soothe the stranger's woe;
For grief was heavy at his heart,
And tears began to flow.

XVI.

His rising cares the Hermit spy'd,
With answ'ring care opprest:
"And whence, unhappy youth," he cry'd,
"The sorrows of thy breast?

XVII.

"From better habitations spurn'd,
"Reluctant dost thou rove?
"Or grieve for friendship unreturn'd,
"Or unregarded love?

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XVIII.

" Alas! the joys that fortune brings,
" Are trifling, and decay;
" And those who prize the paltry things,
" More trifling still than they.

XIX.

" And what is friendship but a name,
" A charm that lulls to sleep;
" A shade that follows wealth or fame,
" But leaves the wretch to weep?

XX.

" And love is still an emptier sound,
" The modern fair-one's jest:
" On earth unseen, or only found
" To warm the turtle's nest.

XXI.

" For shame, fond youth, thy sorrows hush,
" And spurn the sex," he said:
But while he spoke, a rising blush
His love-lorn guest betray'd.

XXII.

Surpris'd he sees new beauties rise,
Swift mantling to the view;
Like colours o'er the morning skies,
As bright, as transient too.

XXIII.

The bashful look, the rising breast,
Alternate spread alarms:
The lovely stranger stands confest
A maid in all her charms.

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XXIV.

" And, ah! forgive a stranger rude,
" A wretch forlorn," she cry'd;
" Whose feet unhallow'd thus intrude
" Where Heav'n and you reside.

XXV.

" But let a maid thy pity share,
" Whom love has taught to stray:
" Who seeks for rest, but finds despair
" Companion of her way.

XXVI.

" My father liv'd beside the Tyne,
" A wealthy lord was he:
" And all his wealth was mark'd as mine,
" He had but only me.

XXVII.

" To win me from his tender arms,
" Unnumber'd suitors came;
" Who prais'd me for imputed charms,
" And felt, or feign'd a flame.

XXVIII.

" Each hour a mercenary crowd
" With richest proffers strove;
" Amongst the rest young Edwin bow'd,
" But never talk'd of love.

XXIX.

" In humble, simplest habit clad,
" No wealth nor power had he;
" Wisdom and worth were all he had,
" But these were all to me.

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XXX.

" And when, beside me in the dale,
" He carol'd lays of love,
" His breath lent fragrance to the gale,
" And music to the grove.*

XXXI.

" The blossom opening to the day,
" The dews of Heav'n refin'd,
" Could nought of purity display
" To emulate his mind.

XXXII.

" The dew, the blossom on the tree,
" With charms inconstant shine;
" Their charms were his, but woe to me,
" Their constancy was mine.

XXXIII.

" For still I try'd each fickle art,
" Importunate and vain;
" And while his passion touch'd my heart,
" I triumph'd in his pain.

XXXIV.

" Till quite dejected with my scorn,
" He left me to my pride;
" And sought a solitude forlorn,
" In secret where he died.

XXXV.

" But mine the sorrow, mine the fault,
" And well my life shall pay;
" I'll seek the solitude he sought,
" And stretch me where he lay.

* This stanza, never before printed, was communicated by Richard Archdal, Esq. who received it from the Author himself.

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XXXVI.

" And there forlorn despairing hid,
" I'll lay me down and die;
" 'Twas so for me that Edwin did,
" And so for him will I."

XXXVII.

" Forbid it Heav'n!" the Hermit cry'd,
And clasp'd her to his breast:
The wond'ring fair-one turn'd to chide,—
'Twas Edwin's self that press'd.

XXXVIII.

" Turn, Angelina, ever dear,
" My charmer, turn to see
" Thy own, thy long-lost Edwin here,
" Restor'd to love and thee.

XXXIX.

" Thus let me hold thee to my heart,
" And ev'ry care resign:
" And shall we never, never part,
" My life,—my all that's mine?

XL.

" No, never from this hour to part,
" We'll live and love so true;
" The sigh that rends thy constant heart,
" Shall break thy Edwin's too."

While this ballad was reading, Sophia seemed to mix an air of tenderness with her approbation. But our tranquillity was soon disturbed by the report of a gun just by us, and immediately after a man was seen bursting through the hedge, to take up the game he had killed. This sportsman was the 'Squire's chaplain, who had shot one of the blackbirds that so agreeably entertained us. So loud a report, and so

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near, startled my daughters: and I could perceive that Sophia in the fright had thrown herself into Mr. Burchell's arms for protection. The gentleman came up, and asked pardon for having disturbed us, affirming that he was ignorant of our being so near. He therefore sate down by my youngest daughter, and sportsman-like, offered her what he had killed that morning. She was going to refuse, but a private look from her mother soon induced her to correct the mistake, and accept his present, though with some reluctance. My wife, as usual, discovered her pride in a whisper, observing, that Sophy had made a conquest of the chaplain, as well as her sister had of the 'Squire. I suspected, however, with more probability, that her affections were placed upon a different object. The chaplain's errand was to inform us, that Mr. Thornhill had provided music and refreshments, and intended that night giving the young ladies a ball by moonlight, on the grass-plot before our door. "Nor can I deny," continued he, "but I have an interest in being first to deliver "this message, as I expect for my reward to be "honoured with Miss Sophy's hand as a partner." To this my girl replied, that she should have no objection, if she could do it with honour; "But here," continued she, "is a gentleman," looking at Mr. Burchell, "who has been my companion in the task "for the day, and it is fit he should share in its "amusements." Mr. Burchell returned her a compliment for her intentions; but resigned her up to the chaplain, adding that he was to go that night five miles, being invited to an harvest supper. His refusal appeared to me a little extraordinary; nor could I conceive how so sensible a girl as my youngest, could thus prefer a man of broken fortunes to one whose expectations were much greater. But as men are most capable of distinguishing merit in women, so the ladies often form the truest judg-

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ments of us. The two sexes seem placed as spies upon each other, and are furnished with different abilities, adapted for mutual inspection.

CHAP. IX.

Two ladies of great distinction introduced. Superior finery ever seems to confer superior breeding.

Mr. Burchell had scarcely taken leave, and Sophia consented to dance with the chaplain, when my little ones came running out to tell us that the 'Squire was come, with a crowd of company. Upon our return, we found our landlord, with a couple of under-gentlemen and two young ladies richly dressed, whom he introduced as women of very great distinction and fashion from town. We happened not to have chairs enough for the whole company; but Mr. Thornhill immediately proposed that every gentleman should sit in a lady's lap. This I positively objected to, notwithstanding a look of disapprobation from my wife. Moses was therefore dispatched to borrow a couple of chairs; and as we were in want of ladies to make up a set at country-dances, the two gentlemen went with him in quest of a couple of partners. Chairs and partners were soon provided. The gentlemen returned with my neighbour Flamborough's rosy daughters, flaunting with red top-knots; but an unlucky circumstance was not adverted to: though the Miss Flamboroughs were reckoned the very best dancers in the parish, and understood the jig and the round-about to perfection; yet they were totally unacquainted with country-dances. This at first discomposed us: however, after a little shoving and dragging, they at last went merrily on. Our music

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consisted of two fiddles, with a pipe and tabor. The moon shone bright; Mr. Thornhill and my eldest daughter led up the ball, to the great delight of the spectators; for the neighbours, hearing what was going forward, came flocking about us. My girl moved with so much grace and vivacity, that my wife could not avoid discovering the pride of her heart, by assuring me, that though the little chit did it so cleverly, all the steps were stolen from herself. The ladies of the town strove hard to be equally easy, but without success. They swam, sprawled, languished, and frisked; but all would not do: the gazers indeed owned that it was fine; but neighbour Flamborough observed, that Miss Livy's feet seemed as pat to the music as its echo. After the dance had continued about an hour, the two ladies, who were apprehensive of catching cold, moved to break up the ball. One of them, I thought, expressed her sentiments upon this occasion in a very coarse manner, when she observed that *by the living jingo she was all of a muck of sweat.* Upon our return to the house, we found a very elegant cold supper, which Mr. Thornhill had ordered to be brought with him. The conversation at this time was more reserved than before. The two ladies threw my girls quite into the shade; for they would talk of nothing but high life, and high-lived company; with other fashionable topics, such as pictures, taste, Shakespear, and the musical glasses. 'Tis true they once or twice mortified us sensibly by slipping out an oath; but that appeared to me as the surest symptom of their distinction (though I am since informed that swearing is perfectly unfashionable). Their finery, however, threw a veil over any grossness in their conversation. My daughters seemed to regard their superior accomplishments with envy; and what appeared amiss was ascribed to tip-top quality breeding. But the condescension of the ladies was still superior to their

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their other accomplishments. One of them observed, that had Miss Olivia seen a little more of the world, it would greatly improve her. To which the other added, that a single winter in town would make her little Sophia quite another thing. My wife warmly assented to both; adding, that there was nothing she more ardently wished than to give her girls a single winter's polishing. To this I could not help replying, that their breeding was already superior to their fortune; and that greater refinement would only serve to make their poverty ridiculous, and give them a taste for pleasures they had no right to possess.—"And what pleasures," cried Mr. Thornhill, "do they not deserve to possess, who have so much "in their power to bestow? As for my part," continued he, "my fortune is pretty large; love, liberty, "and pleasure, are my maxims; but, curse me, if a "settlement of half my estate could give my charming Olivia pleasure, it should be hers; and the only "favour I would ask in return would be to add "myself to the benefit." I was not such a stranger to the world as to be ignorant that this was the fashionable cant to disguise the insolence of the basest proposal; but I made an effort to suppress my resentment. "Sir," cried I, "the family which "you now condescend to favour with your company, "has been bred with as nice a sense of honour as "you. Any attempts to injure that, may be attended with very dangerous consequences. Honour, "Sir, is our only possession at present, and of that "last treasure we must be particularly careful."—I was soon sorry for the warmth with which I had spoken this, when the young gentleman, grasping my hand, swore he commended my spirit, though he disapproved my suspicions. "As to your present hint," continued he, "I protest nothing was farther from "my heart than such a thought. No, by all that's "tempting, the virtue that will stand a regular siege

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" was never to my taste; for all my amours are carried " by a coup de main."

The two ladies, who affected to be ignorant of the rest, seemed highly displeased with this last stroke of freedom, and began a very discreet and serious dialogue upon virtue: in this my wife, the chaplain, and I, soon joined; and the 'Squire himself was at last brought to confess a sense of sorrow for his former excesses. We talked of the pleasures of temperance, and of the sun-shine in the mind unpolluted with guilt. I was so well pleased, that my little ones were kept up beyond the usual time to be edified by so much good conversation. Mr. Thornhill even went beyond me, and demanded if I had any objection to giving prayers. I joyfully embraced the proposal, and in this manner the night was passed in a most comfortable way, till at last the company began to thing of returning. The ladies seemed very unwilling to part with my daughters; for whom they had conceived a particular affection, and joined in a request to have the pleasure of their company home. The 'Squire seconded the proposal, and my wife added her entreaties; the girls too looked upon me as if they wished to go. In this perplexity I made two or three excuses, which my daughters as readily removed; so that at last I was obliged to give a peremptory refusal; for which we had nothing but sullen looks and short answers the whole day ensuing.

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CHAP. X.

The family endeavours to cope with their betters. The miseries of the poor when they attempt to appear above their circumstances.

I NOW began to find that all my long and painful lectures upon temperance, simplicity, and contentment, were entirely disregarded. The distinctions lately paid us by our betters awaked that pride which I had laid asleep, but not removed. Our windows again, as formerly, were filled with washes for the neck and face. The sun was dreaded as an enemy to the skin without doors, and the fire as a spoiler of the complexion within. My wife observed, that rising too early would hurt her daughter's eyes, that working after dinner would redden their noses, and she convinced me that the hands never looked so white as when they did nothing. Instead therefore of finishing George's shirts, we now had them new modelling their old gauzes, or flourishing upon catgut. The poor Miss Flamboroughs, their former gay companions, were cast off as mean acquaintance, and the whole conversation ran upon high life and high-lived company, with pictures, taste, Shakespear, and the musical glasses.

But we could have borne all this, had not a fortune-telling gipsy come to raise us into perfect sublimity. The tawny sibyl no sooner appeared, than my girls came running to me for a shilling apiece to cross her hand with silver. To say the truth, I was tired of being always wise, and could not help gratifying their request, because I loved to see them happy. I gave each of them a shilling; though, for the honour of the family, it must be observed, that they never went without money themselves, as

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my wife always generously let them have a guinea each, to keep in their pockets; but with strict injunctions never to change it. After they had been closetted up with the fortune-teller for some time, I knew by their looks, upon their returning, that they had been promised something great.—"Well, "my girls, how have you sped? Tell me, Livy, "has the fortune-teller given thee a penny-worth?" "—"I protest, papa," says the girl, "I believe she "deals with somebody that's not right; for she "positively declared, that I am to be married to a "'Squire in less than a twelvemonth!"—"Well, "now Sophy, my child," said I, "and what sort "of a husband are you to have?" "Sir," replied she, "I am to have a Lord soon after my sister has "married the 'Squire."——"How," cried I, "is that "all you are to have for your two shillings! Only a "Lord and a 'Squire for two shillings! You fools, I "could have promised you a Prince and a Nabob for "half the money."

This curiosity of theirs, however, was attended with very serious effects: we now began to think ourselves designed by the stars to something exalted, and already anticipated our future grandeur.

It has been a thousand times observed, and I must observe it once more, that the hours we pass with happy prospects in view, are more pleasing than those crowned with fruition. In the first case we cook the dish to our own appetite; in the latter, nature cooks it for us. It is impossible to repeat the train of agreeable reveries we called up for our entertainment. We looked upon our fortunes as once more rising; and as the whole parish asserted that the 'Squire was in love with my daughter, she was actually so with him; for they persuaded her into the passion. In this agreeable interval, my wife had the most lucky dreams in the world, which she took care to tell us every morning, with great solemnity and exactness.

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It was one night a coffin and cross bones, the sign of an approaching wedding: at another time she imagined her daughter's pockets filled with farthings, a certain sign of their being shortly stuffed with gold. The girls themselves had their omens. They felt strange kisses on their lips; they saw rings in the candle, purses bounced from the fire, and true love knots lurked in the bottom of every tea-cup.

Towards the end of the week we received a card from the town ladies; in which, with their compliments, they hoped to see all our family at church the Sunday following. All Saturday morning I could perceive, in consequence of this, my wife and daughters in close conference together, and now and then glancing at me with looks that betrayed a latent plot. To be sincere, I had strong suspicions that some absurd proposal was preparing for appearing with splendor the next day. In the evening they began their operations in a very regular manner, and my wife undertook to conduct the siege. After tea, when I seemed in spirits, she began thus——"I "fancy, Charles, my dear, we shall have a great "deal of good company at our church to-morrow."—"Perhaps we may, my dear," returned I; "though "you need be under no uneasiness about that, you "shall have a sermon whether there be or not."—— "That is what I expect," returned she; "but I think, "my dear, we ought to appear there as decently as "possible, for who knows what may happen?" "Your "precautions," replied I, "are highly commendable. "A decent behaviour and appearance in church is "what charms me. We should be devout and humble, cheerful and serene."—"Yes," cried she, "I "know that; but I mean we should go there in as "proper a manner as possible; not altogether like "the scrubs about us." "You are quite right, my "dear," returned I, "and I was going to make the "very same proposal. The proper manner of going

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" is, to go there as early as possible, to have time for " meditation before the service begins."—" Phoo, " Charles," interrupted she, " all that is very true; " but not what I would be at. I mean we should go " there genteelly. You know the church is two miles " off, and I protest I don't like to see my daughters " trudging up to their pew all blowzed and red with " walking, and looking for all the world as if they " had been winners at a smock-race. Now, my dear, " my proposal is this: there are our two plough-horses, " the colt that has been in our family these nine " years, and his companion, Blackberry, that has " scarcely done an earthly thing for this month past. " They are both grown fat and lazy. Why should " not they do something as well as we? And let " me tell you, when Moses has trimmed them a little, " they will cut a very tolerable figure."

To this proposal I objected, that walking would be twenty times more genteel than such a paltry conveyance, as Blackberry was wall-eyed, and the colt wanted a tail: that they had never been broke to the rein; but had an hundred vicious tricks; and that we had but one saddle and pillion in the whole house. All these objections, however, were overruled; so that I was obliged to comply. The next morning I perceived them not a little busy in collecting such materials as might be necessary for the expedition; but as I found it would be a business of time, I walked on to the church before, and they promised speedily to follow. I waited near an hour in the reading-desk for their arrival; but not finding them come as expected, I was obliged to begin, and went through the service, not without some uneasiness at finding them absent. This was encreased when all was finished, and no appearance of the family. I therefore walked back by the horse-way, which was five miles round, though the foot-way was but two, and when got about half way

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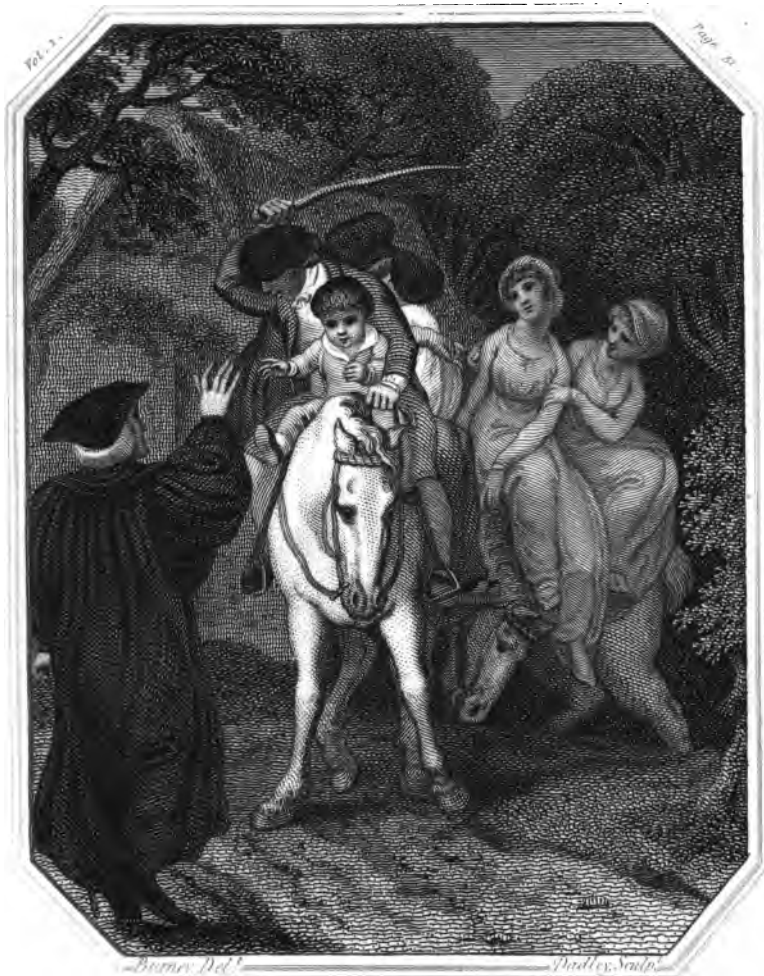

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home perceived the procession marching slowly forward towards the church; my son, my wife, and the two little ones, exalted on one horse, and my two daughters upon the other. I demanded the cause of their delay; but I soon found by their looks they had met with a thousand misfortunes on the road. The horses had at first refused to move from the door, till Mr. Burchell was kind enough to beat them forward for about two hundred yards with his cudgel. Next, the straps of my wife's pillion broke down, and they were obliged to stop to repair them before they could proceed. After that, one of the horses took it into his head to stand still, and neither blows nor entreaties could prevail with him to proceed. He was just recovering from this dismal situation when I found them; but perceiving every thing safe, I own their present mortification did not much displease me, as it would give me many opportunities of future triumph, and teach my daughters more humility.

CHAP. XI.

The family still resolve to hold up their heads.

MICHAELMAS eve happening on the next day, we were invited to burn nuts and play tricks at neighbour Flamborough's. Our late mortifications had humbled us a little, or it is probable we might have rejected such an invitation with contempt: however, we suffered ourselves to be happy. Our honest

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neighbour's goose and dumplings were fine, and the lamb's wool, even in the opinion of my wife, who was a connoisseur, was excellent. It is true, his manner of telling stories was not quite so well. They were very long, and very dull, and all about himself, and we had laughed at them ten times before: however, we were kind enough to laugh at them once more.

Mr. Burchell, who was of the party, was always fond of seeing some innocent amusement going forward, and set the boys and girls to blind man's buff. My wife too was persuaded to join in the diversion, and it gave me pleasure to think she was not yet too old. In the mean time, my neighbour and I looked on, laughed at every feat, and praised our own dexterity when we were young. Hot cockles succeeded next, questions and commands followed that, and last of all, they sate down to hunt the slipper. As every person may not be acquainted with this primæval pastime, it may be necessary to observe, that the company at this play plant themselves in a ring upon the ground, all, except one who stands in the middle, whose business it is to catch a shoe, which the company shove about under their hams from one to another, something like a weaver's shuttle. As it is impossible, in this case, for the lady who is up to face all the company at once, the great beauty of the play lies in hitting her a thump with the heel of the shoe on that side least capable of making a defence. It was in this manner that my eldest daughter was hemmed in, and thumped about, all blowzed, in spirits, and bawling for fair play, fair play, with a voice that might deafen a ballad-singer, when, confusion on confusion, who should enter the room but our two great acquaintances from town, Lady Blarney and Miss Carolina Wilelmina Amelia Skeggs! Description

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would but beggar, therefore it is unnecessary to describe this new mortification. Death! To be seen by ladies of such high breeding in such vulgar attitudes! Nothing better could ensue from such a vulgar play of Mr. Flamborough's proposing. We seemed stuck to the ground for some time, as if actually petrified with amazement.

The two ladies had been at our house to see us, and finding us from home, came after us hither, as they were uneasy to know what accident could have kept us from church the day before. Olivia undertook to be our prolocutor, and delivered the whole in a summary way, only saying, "We were thrown "from our horses." At which account the ladies were greatly concerned; but being told the family received no hurt, they were extremely glad; but being informed that we were almost killed by the fright, they were vastly sorry; but hearing that we had a very good night, they were extremely glad again. Nothing could exceed their complaisance to my daughters; their professions the last evening were warm, but now they were ardent. They protested a desire of having a more lasting acquaintance. Lady Blarney was particularly attached to Olivia; Miss Carolina Wilelmina Amelia Skeggs (I love to give the whole name) took a greater fancy to her sister. They supported the conversation between themselves, while my daughters sate silent, admiring their exalted breeding. But as every reader, however beggarly himself, is fond of high-lived dialogues, with anecdotes of Lords, Ladies, and Knights of the Garter, I must beg leave to give him the concluding part of the present conversation.

"All that I know of the matter," cried Miss Skeggs, "is this, that it may be true, or it may not "be true: but this I can assure your Ladyship, that "the whole rout was in amaze; his Lordship turned

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" all manner of colours, my Lady fell into a sound, " but Sir Tomkyn, drawing his sword, swore he was " her's to the last drop of his blood."

" Well," replied our Peeress, " this I can say, " that the Duchess never told me a syllable of the " matter, and I believe her Grace would keep nothing " a secret from me. This you may depend upon as " fact, that the next morning my Lord Duke cried out " three times to his valet de chambre, Jernigan, Jer- " nigan, Jernigan, bring me my garters."

But previously I should have mentioned the very impolite behaviour of Mr. Burchell, who, during this discourse, sate with his face turned to the fire, and at the conclusion of every sentence would cry out *Fudge!* an expression which displeased us all, and in some measure damped the rising spirit of the conversation.

" Besides, my dear Skeggs," continued our Peeress, " there is nothing of this in the copy of verses that " Dr. Burdock made upon the occasion." *Fudge!*

" I am surprised at that," cried Miss Skeggs; " for he seldom leaves any thing out, as he writes " only for his own amusement. But can your " Ladyship favour me with a sight of them?" *Fudge!*

" My dear creature," replied our Peeress, " do " you think I carry such things about me? Though " they are very fine to be sure, and I think myself " something of a judge; at least I know what pleases " myself. Indeed I was ever an admirer of all Doctor " Burdock's little pieces; for except what he does, " and our dear Countess at Hanover-Square, there's " nothing comes out but the most lowest stuff in " nature; not a bit of high life among them." *Fudge!*

" Your Ladyship should except," says t'other, " your own things in the Lady's Magazine. I " hope you'll say there's nothing low-lived there?

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"But I suppose we are to have no more from that "quarter?" *Fudge!*

"Why, my dear," says the Lady, "you know my "reader and companion has left me, to be married to "Captain Roach, and as my poor eyes won't suffer me "to write myself, I have been for some time looking "out for another. A proper person is no easy matter "to find, and to be sure thirty pounds a year is a "small stipend for a well-bred girl of character, that "can read, write, and behave in company; as for the "chits about town, there is no bearing them about "one." *Fudge!*

"That I know," cried Miss Skeggs, "by experi-"ence. For of the three companions I had this last "half year, one of them refused to do plain work an "hour in a day, another thought twenty-five guineas "a year too small a salary, and I was obliged to send "away the third, because I suspected an intrigue with "the chaplain. Virtue, my dear Lady Blarney, virtue "is worth any price; but where is that to be found?" *Fudge!*

My wife had been for a long time all attention to this discourse; but was particularly struck with the latter part of it. Thirty pounds and twenty-five guineas a year made fifty-six pounds five shillings English money, all which was in a manner going a-begging, and might easily be secured in the family. She for a moment studied my looks for approbation; and, to own a truth, I was of opinion, that two such places would fit our two daughters exactly. Besides, if the 'Squire had any real affection for my eldest daughter, this would be the way to make her every way qualified for her fortune. My wife therefore was resolved that we should not be deprived of such advantages for want of assurance, and undertook to harangue for the family. "I hope," cried she, "your "Ladyships will pardon my present presumption. It "is true, we have no right to pretend to such favours;

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"but yet it is natural for me to wish putting my "children forward in the world. And I will be bold "to say my two girls have had a pretty good educa- "tion, and capacity, at least the country can't shew "better. They can read, write, and cast accompts; "they understand their needle, breadstitch, cross and "change, and all manner of plain-work; they can "pink, point, and frill; and know something of "music; they can do up small clothes, work upon "catgut; my eldest can cut paper, and my youngest "has a very pretty manner of telling fortunes upon "the cards." *Fudge!*

When she had delivered this pretty piece of eloquence, the two ladies looked at each other a few minutes in silence, with an air of doubt and importance. At last, Miss Carolina Wilelmina Amelia Skeggs condescended to observe, that the young ladies, from the opinion she could form of them from so slight an acquaintance, seemed very fit for such employments: "But a thing of this kind, Madam," cried she, addressing my spouse, "requires a thorough "examination into characters, and a more perfect "knowledge of each other. Not, Madam," continued she, "that I in the least suspect the young ladies' "virtue, prudence, and discretion; but there is a form "in these things, Madam, there is a form."

My wife approved her suspicions very much, observing, that she was very apt to be suspicious herself; but referred her to all the neighbours for a character: but this our Peeress declined as unnecessary, alleging that her cousin Thornhill's recommendation would be sufficient, and upon this we rested our petition.

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CHAP. XII.

Fortune seems resolved to humble the family of Wakefield. Mortifications are often more painful than real calamities.

WHEN we were returned home, the night was dedicated to schemes of future conquest. Deborah exerted much sagacity in conjecturing which of the two girls was likely to have the best place, and most opportunities of seeing good company. The only obstacle to our preferment was in obtaining the 'Squire's recommendation; but he had already shewn us too many instances of his friendship to doubt of it now. Even in bed my wife kept up the usual theme: "Well, faith, my dear Charles, between "ourselves, I think we have made an excellent day's "work of it."——"Pretty well," cried I, not knowing what to say.——"What, only pretty well!" returned she. "I think it is very well. Suppose "the girls should come to make acquaintances of "taste in town! This I am assured of, that London "is the only place in the world for all manner of hus-"bands. Besides, my dear, stranger things happen "every day: and as ladies of quality are so taken "with my daughters, what will not men of quality "be! Entre nous, I protest I like my Lady Blarney "vastly, so very obliging. However, Miss Carolina "Wilelmina Amelia Skeggs has my warm heart. "But yet, when they came to talk of places in town, "you saw at once how I nailed them. Tell me, "my dear, don't you think I did for my children "there?"——"Ay," returned I, not knowing well what to think of the matter, "heaven grant they "may be both the better for it this day three months!" This was one of those observations I usually made

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to impress my wife with an opinion of my sagacity; for if the girls succeeded, then it was a pious wish fulfilled; but if any thing unfortunate ensued, then it might be looked upon as a prophecy. All this conversation, however, was only preparatory to another scheme, and indeed I dreaded as much. This was nothing less than that, as we were now to hold up our heads a little higher in the world, it would be proper to sell the colt, which was grown old, at a neighbouring fair, and buy us an horse that would carry single or double upon an occasion, and make a pretty appearance at church or upon a visit. This at first I opposed stoutly; but it was as stoutly defended. However, as I weakened, my antagonists gained strength, till at last it was resolved to part with him.

As the fair happened on the following day, I had intentions of going myself; but my wife persuaded me that I had got a cold, and nothing could prevail upon her to permit me from home. "No, my dear," said she, "our son Moses is a discreet boy, and can "buy and sell to very good advantage; you know all "our great bargains are of his purchasing. He always "stands out and higgles, and actually tires them till "he gets a bargain."

As I had some opinion of my son's prudence, I was willing enough to entrust him with this commission; and the next morning I perceived his sisters mighty busy in fitting out Moses for the fair; trimming his hair, brushing his buckles, and cocking his hat with pins. The business of the toilet being over, we had at last the satisfaction of seeing him mounted upon the colt, with a deal box before him to bring home groceries in. He had on a coat made of that cloth they call thunder and lightning, which, though grown too short, was much too good to be thrown away. His waistcoat was of gosling green, and his sisters had tied his hair with a broad black riband.

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We all followed him several paces from the door, bawling after him good luck, good luck, till we could see him no longer.

He was scarcely gone, when Mr. Thornhill's butler came to congratulate us upon our good fortune, saying, that he overheard his young master mention our names with great commendation.

Good fortune seemed resolved not to come alone. Another footman from the same family followed, with a card for my daughters, importing, that the two ladies had received such pleasing accounts from Mr. Thornhill of us all, that, after a few previous inquiries, they hoped to be perfectly satisfied. "Ay," cried my wife, "I now see it is no easy matter to "get into the families of the great; but when one "once gets in, then, as Moses says, one may go to "sleep." To this piece of humour, for she intended it for wit, my daughters assented with a loud laugh of pleasure. In short, such was her satisfaction at this message, that she actually put her hand in her pocket, and gave the messenger seven-pence halfpenny.

This was to be our visiting-day. The next that came was Mr. Burchell, who had been at the fair. He brought my little ones a pennyworth of gingerbread each, which my wife undertook to keep for them, and give them by letters at a time. He brought my daughters also a couple of boxes, in which they might keep wafers, snuff, patches, or even money, when they got it. My wife was usually fond of a weasel skin purse, as being the most lucky; but this by the bye. We had still a regard for Mr. Burchell, though his late rude behaviour was in some measure displeasing; nor could we now avoid communicating our happiness to him, and asking his advice: although we seldom followed advice, we were all ready enough to ask it. When he read the note from the two ladies, he shook his

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head, and observed, that an affair of this sort demanded the utmost circumspection.——This air of diffidence highly displeased my wife. "I never "doubted, Sir," cried she, "your readiness to be "against my daughters and me. You have more "circumspection than is wanted. However, I fancy "when we come to ask advice, we will apply to "persons who seem to have made use of it themselves." ——"Whatever my own conduct may "have been, Madam," replied he, "is not the present question; though as I have made no use of "advice myself, I should in conscience give it to "those that will."——As I was apprehensive this answer might draw on a repartee, making up by abuse what it wanted in wit, I changed the subject, by seeming to wonder what could keep our son so long at the fair, as it was now almost nightfall.—— "Never mind our son," cried my wife, "depend "upon it he knows what he is about. I'll warrant "we'll never see him sell his hen of a rainy day. I "have seen him buy such bargains as would amaze "one. I'll tell you a good story about that, that will "make you split your sides with laughing——But as "I live, yonder comes Moses, without an horse, and "the box at his back."

As she spoke, Moses came slowly on foot, and sweating under the deal box, which he had strapped round his shoulders like a pedlar.—"Welcome, "welcome, Moses; well, my boy, what have you "brought us from the fair?"——"I have brought "you myself," cried Moses, with a sly look, and resting the box on the dresser.—"Ah, Moses," cried my wife, "that we know, but where is the horse?" "I have sold him," cried Moses, "for three pounds "five shillings and two-pence."——"Well done, "my good boy," returned she, "I knew you "would touch them off. Between ourselves, three "pounds five shillings and two-pence is no bad

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" day's work. Come, let us have it then."——" I " have brought back no money," cried Moses again, " I have laid it all out in a bargain, and here it is," pulling out a bundle from his breast: " here they are; " a gross of green spectacles, with silver rims and sha- " green cases."——" A gross of green spectacles!" repeated my wife in a faint voice. " And you have " parted with the colt, and brought us back nothing " but a gross of green paltry spectacles!"—" Dear " mother," cried the boy, " why won't you listen to " reason? I had them a dead bargain, or I should not " have bought them. The silver rims alone will sell " for double the money."—" A fig for the silver " rims," cried my wife in a passion: " I dare swear " they won't sell for above half the money at the rate " of broken silver, five shillings an ounce."—" You " need be under no uneasiness," cried I, " about sell- " ing the rims; for they are not worth sixpence, for " I perceive they are only copper varnished over."— " What," cried my wife, " not silver, the rims not " silver!" " No," cried I, " no more silver than your " saucepan."—" And so," returned she, " we have " parted with the colt, and have only got a gross of " green spectacles with copper rims and shagreen " cases! A murrain take such trumpery! The block- " head has been imposed upon, and should have " known his company better."——" There, my dear," cried I, " you are wrong, he should not have known " them at all."—" Marry, hang the idiot," returned she, " to bring me such stuff! if I had them I would " throw them in the fire." " There again you are " wrong, my dear," cried I; " for though they be " copper, we will keep them by us, as copper spec- " tacles, you know, are better than nothing."

By this time the unfortunate Moses was undeceived. He now saw that he had indeed been imposed upon by a prowling sharper, who, observing his figure, had marked him for an easy prey. I therefore asked the

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circumstances of his deception. He sold the horse, it seems, and walked the fair in search of another. A reverend looking man brought him to a tent, under pretence of having one to sell. "Here," continued Moses, "we met another man, very well dressed, "who desired to borrow twenty pounds upon these, "saying, that he wanted money, and would dispose "of them for a third of the value. The first gentle- "man, who pretended to be my friend, whispered me "to buy them, and cautioned me not to let so good "an offer pass. I sent for Mr. Flamborough, and "they talked him up as finely as they did me, and "so at last we were persuaded to buy the two gross "between us."

CHAP. XIII.

Mr. Burchell is found to be an enemy; for he has the confidence to give disagreeable advice.

Our family had now made several attempts to be fine; but some unforeseen disaster demolished each as soon as projected. I endeavoured to take the advantage of every disappointment, to improve their good sense in proportion as they were frustrated in ambition. "You see, my children," cried I, "how little "is to be got by attempts to impose upon the world, "in coping with our betters. Such as are poor and "will associate with none but the rich, are hated by "those they avoid, and despised by those they follow. "Unequal combinations are always disadvantageous "to the weaker side: the rich having the pleasure, "and the poor the inconveniences that result from "them. But come, Dick, my boy, and repeat the

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" fable that you were reading to-day, for the good of " the company."

" Once upon a time," cried the child, " a Giant " and a Dwarf were friends, and kept together. " They made a bargain that they would never for- " sake each other, but go seek adventures. The " first battle they fought was with two Saracens, " and the Dwarf, who was very courageous, dealt " one of the champions a most angry blow. It did " the Saracen very little injury, who, lifting up his " sword, fairly struck off the poor Dwarf's arm. He " was now in a woful plight; but the Giant coming " to his assistance, in a short time left the two Sara- " cens dead on the plain, and the Dwarf cut off the " dead man's head out of spite. They then tra- " velled on to another adventure. This was against " three bloody-minded Satyrs, who were carrying " away a damsel in distress. The Dwarf was not " quite so fierce now as before; but for all that, " struck the first blow, which was returned by an- " other, that knocked out his eye; but the Giant " was soon up with them, and had they not fled, " would certainly have killed them every one. They " were all very joyful for this victory, and the dam- " sel who was relieved, fell in love with the Giant, " and married him. They now travelled far, and " farther than I can tell, till they met with a com- " pany of robbers. The Giant, for the first time, " was foremost now; but the Dwarf was not far be- " hind. The battle was stout and long. Wherever " the Giant came, all fell before him; but the " Dwarf had like to have been killed more than " once. At last the victory declared for the two " adventurers; but the Dwarf lost his leg. The " Dwarf was now without an arm, a leg, and an " eye, while the Giant was without a single wound. " Upon which he cried out to his little companion, " My little hero, this is glorious sport; let us get

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" one victory more, and then we shall have honour " for ever. No, cries the Dwarf, who was by this " time grown wiser, no, I declare off; I'll fight no " more: for I find in every battle that you get all " the honour and rewards, but all the blows fall upon " me."

I was going to moralize this fable, when our attention was called off to a warm dispute between my wife and Mr. Burchell, upon my daughters' intended expedition to town. My wife very strenuously insisted upon the advantages that would result from it. Mr. Burchell, on the contrary, dissuaded her with great ardour, and I stood neuter. His present dissuasions seemed but the second part of those which were received with so ill a grace in the morning. The dispute grew high, while poor Deborah, instead of reasoning stronger, talked louder, and at last was obliged to take shelter from a defeat in clamour. The conclusion of her harangue, however, was highly displeasing to us all: she knew, she said, of some who had their own secret reasons for what they advised; but, for her part, she wished such to stay away from her house for the future.—" Madam," cried Burchell, with looks of great composure, which tended to inflame her the more, " as for secret reasons, you are " right: I have secret reasons, which I forbear to " mention, because you are not able to answer those " of which I make no secret: but I find my visits " here are become troublesome: I'll take my leave " therefore now, and perhaps come once more to take " a final farewell when I am quitting the country." Thus saying, he took up his hat, nor could the attempts of Sophia, whose looks seemed to upbraid his precipitancy, prevent his going.

When gone, we all regarded each other for some minutes with confusion. My wife, who knew herself to be the cause, strove to hide her concern with a forced smile, and an air of assurance, which I was

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willing to reprove: "How, woman," cried I to her, "is it thus we treat strangers? Is it thus we return "their kindness? Be assured, my dear, that these "were the harshest words, and to me the most un- "pleasing, that have escaped your lips!"—"Why "would he provoke me then?" replied she; "but I "know the motives of his advice perfectly well. He "would prevent my girls from going to town, that "he may have the pleasure of my youngest daughter's "company here at home. But whatever happens, "she shall choose better company than such low-lived "fellows as he."—"Low-lived, my dear, do you "call him?" cried I; "it is very possible we may "mistake this man's character, for he seems upon "some occasions the most finished gentleman I ever "knew.——Tell me, Sophia, my girl, has he ever "given you any secret instances of his attachment?"— "His conversation with me, Sir," replied my daugh- ter, "has ever been sensible, modest, and pleasing. "As to aught else, no never. Once, indeed, I re- "member to have heard him say he never knew a "woman who could find merit in a man that seemed "poor." "Such, my dear," cried I, "is the com- "mon cant of all the unfortunate or idle. But I hope "you have been taught to judge properly of such "men, and that it would be even madness to expect "happiness from one who has been so very bad an "œconomist of his own. Your mother and I have "now better prospects for you. The next winter, "which you will probably spend in town, will give "you opportunities of making a more prudent choice."

What Sophia's reflections were upon this occasion, I can't pretend to determine; but I was not displeased at the bottom, that we were rid of a guest from whom I had much to fear. Our breach of hospitality went to my conscience a little; but I quickly silenced that monitor by two or three specious reasons, which served to satisfy and reconcile me to myself. The pain

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which conscience gives the man who has already done wrong, is soon got over. Conscience is a coward; and those faults it has not strength enough to prevent, it seldom has justice enough to accuse.

CHAP. XIV.

Fresh mortifications, or a demonstration that seeming calamities may be real blessings.

THE journey of my daughters to town was now resolved upon, Mr. Thornhill having kindly promised to inspect their conduct himself, and inform us by letter of their behaviour. But it was thought indispensably necessary that their appearance should equal the greatness of their expectations, which could not be done without expense. We debated therefore in full council, what were the easiest methods of raising money, or, more properly speaking, what we could most conveniently sell. The deliberation was soon finished; it was found that our remaining horse was utterly useless for the plough, without his companion, and equally unfit for the road, as wanting an eye; it was therefore determined that we should dispose of him, for the purposes above-mentioned, at the neighbouring fair, and, to prevent imposition, that I should go with him myself. Though this was one of the first mercantile transactions of my life, yet I had no doubt about acquitting myself with reputation. The opinion a man forms of his own prudence is measured by that of the company he keeps; and as mine was mostly in the family way, I had conceived no unfavourable sentiments of my worldly wisdom. My

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wife, however, next morning, at parting, after I had got some paces from the door, called me back, to advise me, in a whisper, to have all my eyes about me.

I had, in the usual forms, when I came to the fair, put my horse through all his paces; but for some time had no bidders. At last a chapman approached, and, after he had for a good while examined the horse round, finding him blind of one eye, he would have nothing to say to him: a second came up; but observing he had a spavin, declared he would not take him for the driving home: a third perceived he had a windgall, and would bid no money: a fourth knew by his eye that he had the botts: a fifth wondered what a plague I could do at the fair with a blind, spavined, galled hack, that was only fit to be cut up for a dog-kennel. By this time I began to have a most hearty contempt for the poor animal myself, and was almost ashamed at the approach of every customer; for though I did not entirely believe all the fellows told me, yet I reflected that the number of witnesses was a strong presumption they were right, and St. Gregory, upon good works, professes himself to be of the same opinion.

I was in this mortifying situation, when a brother clergyman, an old acquaintance, who had also business at the fair, came up, and shaking me by the hand, proposed adjourning to a public-house and taking a glass of whatever we could get. I readily closed with the offer, and entering an ale-house, we were shewn into a little back room, where there was only a venerable old man, who sat wholly intent over a large book, which he was reading. I never in my life saw a figure that prepossessed me more favourably. His locks of silver gray venerably shaded his temples, and his green old age seemed to be the result of health and benevolence. However, his presence did not interrupt our conversation; my friend and I discoursed on the various turns of fortune we had met: the

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Whistonian controversy, my last pamphlet, the archdeacon's reply, and the hard measure that was dealt me. But our attention was in a short time taken off by the appearance of a youth, who, entering the room, respectfully said something softly to the old stranger. "Make no apologies, my child," said the old man; "to do good is a duty we owe to all our fellow-"creatures: take this, I wish it were more; but five "pounds will relieve your distress, and you are welcome." The modest youth shed tears of gratitude, and yet his gratitude was scarcely equal to mine. I could have hugged the good old man in my arms, his benevolence pleased me so. He continued to read, and we resumed our conversation, until my companion, after some time, recollecting that he had business to transact in the fair, promised to be soon back; adding, that he always desired to have as much of Dr. Primrose's company as possible. The old gentleman, hearing my name mentioned, seemed to look at me with attention for some time, and when my friend was gone, most respectfully demanded if I was any way related to the great Primrose, that courageous monogamist, who had been the bulwark of the church. Never did my heart feel sincerer rapture than at that moment. "Sir," cried I, "the "applause of so good a man, as I am sure you are, "adds to that happiness in my breast which your "benevolence has already excited. You behold be-"fore you, Sir, that Dr. Primrose, the monogamist, "whom you have been pleased to call great. You "here see that unfortunate Divine, who has so long, "and it would ill become me to say, successfully, "fought against the deuterogamy of the age." "Sir," cried the stranger, struck with awe, "I fear I have "been too familiar; but you'll forgive my curiosity, "Sir: I beg pardon." "Sir," cried I, grasping his hand, "you are so far from displeasing me by your "familiarity, that I must beg you'll accept my friend-

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" ship, as you already have my esteem." —— " Then " with gratitude I accept the offer," cried he, squeezing me by the hand, " thou glorious pillar of unshaken " orthodoxy; and do I behold—" I here interrupted what he was going to say; for though, as an author, I could digest no small share of flattery, yet now my modesty would permit no more. However, no lovers in romance ever cemented a more instantaneous friendship. We talked upon several subjects: at first I thought he seemed rather devout than learned, and began to think he despised all human doctrines as dross. Yet this no way lessened him in my esteem; for I had for some time begun privately to harbour such an opinion myself. I therefore took occasion to observe, that the world in general began to be blameably indifferent as to doctrinal matters, and followed human speculations too much——"Ay, Sir," replied he, as if he had reserved all his learning to that moment, " Ay, Sir, the world is in its dotage, and yet the " cosmogony or creation of the world has puzzled " philosophers of all ages. What a medley of opinions " have they not broached upon the creation of the " world? Sanchoniathon, Manetho, Berosus, and " Ocellus Lucanus, have all attempted it in vain. " The latter has these words, *Anarchon ara kai* " *atelutaion to pan*, which imply that all things have " neither beginning nor end. Manetho also, who " lived about the time of Nebuchadon-Asser, Asser " being a Syriac word usually applied as a sirname to " the kings of that country, as Teglat Phael-Asser, " Nabon-Asser, he, I say, formed a conjecture equally " absurd; for as we usually say, *ek to biblion kuber-* " *netes*, which implies that books will never teach " the world; so he attempted to investigate — But, " Sir, I ask pardon, I am straying from the question." ——— That he actually was; nor could I for my life see how the creation of the world had any thing to do with the business I was talking of; but it was

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sufficient to shew me that he was a man of letters, and I now reverenced him the more. I was resolved therefore to bring him to the touchstone; but he was too mild and too gentle to contend for victory. Whenever I made any observation that looked like a challenge to controversy, he would smile, shake his head, and say nothing; by which I understood he could say much if he thought proper. The subject therefore insensibly changed from the business of antiquity to that which brought us both to the fair; mine, I told him, was to sell an horse, and, very luckily indeed, his was to buy one for one of his tenants. My horse was soon produced, and in fine we struck a bargain. Nothing now remained but to pay me, and he accordingly pulled out a thirty-pound note, and bid me change it. Not being in a capacity of complying with this demand, he ordered his footman to be called up, who made his appearance in a very genteel livery. "Here, Abraham," cried he, "go and get "gold for this; you'll do it at neighbour Jackson's, "or any where." While the fellow was gone, he entertained me with a pathetic harangue on the great scarcity of silver, which I undertook to improve, by deploring also the great scarcity of gold; so that by the time Abraham returned, we had both agreed that money was never so hard to be come at as now. Abraham returned to inform us, that he had been over the whole fair, and could not get change, though he had offered half a crown for doing it. This was a very great disappointment to us all; but the old gentleman having paused a little, asked me if I knew one Solomon Flamborough, in my part of the country: upon replying that he was my next-door neighbour, "If that be the case then," returned he, "I believe "we shall deal. You shall have a draught upon him, "payable at sight; and let me tell you he is as warm "a man as any within five miles round him. Honest

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"Solomon and I have been acquainted for many years "together. I remember I always beat him at three "jumps; but he could hop on one leg farther than I." A draught upon my neighbour was to me the same as money; for I was sufficiently convinced of his ability: the draught was signed and put into my hands, and Mr. Jenkinson, the old gentleman, his man Abraham, and my horse, old Blackberry, trotted off very well pleased with each other.

After a short interval, being left to reflection, I began to recollect that I had done wrong in taking a draught from a stranger, and so prudently resolved upon following the purchaser, and having back my horse. But this was now too late: I therefore made directly homewards, resolving to get the draught changed into money at my friend's as fast as possible. I found my honest neighbour smoking his pipe at his own door; and informing him that I had a small bill upon him, he read it twice over. "You "can read the name, I suppose," cried I, "Ephraim "Jenkinson." "Yes," returned he, "the name is "written plain enough, and I know the gentleman "too, the greatest rascal under the canopy of heaven. "This is the very same rogue who sold us the specta-"cles. Was he not a venerable-looking man, with "gray hair, and no flaps to his pocket-holes? And "did he not talk a long string of learning about "Greek and cosmogony, and the world?" To this I replied with a groan. "Ay," continued he, "he "has but that one piece of learning in the world, and "he always talks it away whenever he finds a scholar "in company; but I know the rogue, and will catch "him yet."

Though I was already sufficiently mortified, my greatest struggle was to come, in facing my wife and daughters. No truant was ever more afraid of returning to school, there to behold the master's visage,

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than I was of going home. I was determined, however, to anticipate their fury, by first falling into a passion myself.

But, alas! upon entering, I found the family no way disposed for battle. My wife and girls were all in tears, Mr. Thornhill having been there that day to inform them, that their journey to town was entirely over. The two ladies, having heard reports of us from some malicious person about us, were that day set out for London. He could neither discover the tendency, nor the author of these; but whatever they might be, or whoever might have broached them, he continued to assure our family of his friendship and protection. I found, therefore, that they bore my disappointment with great resignation, as it was eclipsed in the greatness of their own. But what perplexed us most was to think who could be so base as to asperse the character of a family so harmless as ours, too humble to excite envy, and too inoffensive to create disgust.

CHAP. XV.

All Mr. Burchell's villainy at once detected. The folly of being over-wise.

THAT evening and a part of the following day was employed in fruitless attempts to discover our enemies; scarcely a family in the neighbourhood but incurred our suspicions, and each of us had reasons for our opinion best known to ourselves. As we were in this perplexity, one of our little boys, who had been playing abroad, brought in a letter-case, which he

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found on the green. It was quickly known to belong to Mr. Burchell, with whom it had been seen, and, upon examination, contained some hints upon different subjects; but what particularly engaged our attention was a sealed note, superscribed, *the copy of a letter to be sent to the two ladies at Thornhill-castle.* It instantly occurred that he was the base informer, and we deliberated whether the note should not be broke open. I was against it; but Sophia, who said she was sure that of all men he would be the last to be guilty of so much baseness, insisted upon its being read. In this she was seconded by the rest of the family, and, at their joint solicitation, I read as follows:

"LADIES,

"THE bearer will sufficiently satisfy you as to "the person from whom this comes: one at least "the friend of innocence, and ready to prevent its "being seduced. I am informed for a truth, that "you have some intention of bringing two young "ladies to town, whom I have some knowledge of, "under the character of companions. As I would "neither have simplicity imposed upon, nor virtue "contaminated, I must offer it as my opinion, that "the impropriety of such a step will be attended "with dangerous consequences. It has never been "my way to treat the infamous or the lewd with "severity; nor should I now have taken this me-"thod of explaining myself, or reproving folly, did "it not aim at guilt. Take therefore the admo-"nition of a friend, and seriously reflect on the "consequences of introducing infamy and vice into "retreats where peace and innocence have hitherto "resided."

Our doubts were now at an end. There seemed indeed something applicable to both sides in this

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letter, and its censures might as well be referred to those to whom it was written, as to us; but the malicious meaning was obvious, and we went no farther. My wife had scarcely patience to hear me to the end, but railed at the writer with unrestrained resentment. Olivia was equally severe, and Sophia seemed perfectly amazed at his baseness. As for my part, it appeared to me one of the vilest instances of unprovoked ingratitude I had met with. Nor could I account for it in any other manner than by imputing it to his desire of detaining my youngest daughter in the country, to have the more frequent opportunities of an interview. In this manner we all sate ruminating upon schemes of vengeance, when our other little boy came running in to tell us that Mr. Burchell was approaching at the other end of the field. It is easier to conceive than describe the complicated sensations which are felt from the pain of a recent injury, and the pleasure of approaching vengeance. Though our intentions were only to upbraid him with his ingratitude; yet it was resolved to do it in a manner that would be perfectly cutting. For this purpose we agreed to meet him with our usual smiles, to chat in the beginning with more than ordinary kindness, to amuse him a little; and then in the midst of the flattering calm to burst upon him like an earthquake, and overwhelm him with the sense of his own baseness. This being resolved upon, my wife undertook to manage the business herself, as she really had some talents for such an undertaking. We saw him approach, he entered, drew a chair, and sate down. —— "A "fine day, Mr. Burchell." —— "A very fine day, "Doctor; though I fancy we shall have some rain "by the shooting of my corns." —— "The shoot-"ing of your horns," cried my wife in a loud fit of laughter, and then asked pardon for being fond of a joke. —— "Dear madam," replied he, "I

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"pardon you with all my heart, for I protest I "should not have thought it a joke had you not "told me." — "Perhaps not, Sir," cried my wife, winking at us, "and yet I dare say you can tell us "how many jokes go to an ounce." —— "I fancy, "madam," returned Burchell, "you have been read- "ing a jest-book this morning, that ounce of jokes "is so very good a conceit; and yet, madam, I had "rather see half an ounce of understanding."—"I "believe you might," cried my wife, still smiling at us, though the laugh was against her; "and yet "I have seen some men pretend to understanding "that have very little."—— "And no doubt," re- turned her antagonist, "you have known ladies set "up for wit that had none." —— I quickly began to find that my wife was likely to gain but little at this business; so I resolved to treat him in a style of more severity myself. "Both wit and understand- "ing," cried I, "are trifles without integrity; it is "that which gives value to every character. The "ignorant peasant, without fault, is greater than the "philosopher with many; for what is genius or cou- "rage without an heart? *An honest man is the "noblest work of God.*"

"I always held that hackney'd maxim of Pope," returned Mr. Burchell, "as very unworthy a man "of genius, and a base desertion of his own su- "periority. As the reputation of books is raised "not by their freedom from defect, but the great- "ness of their beauties; so should that of men be "prized not for their exemption from fault, but the "size of those virtues they are possessed of. The "scholar may want prudence, the statesman may "have pride, and the champion ferocity; but shall "we prefer to these the low mechanic, who labo- "riously plods through life without censure or ap- "plause? We might as well prefer the tame cor- "rect paintings of the Flemish school to the erro-

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"neous, but sublime animations of the Roman "pencil."

"Sir," replied I, "your present observation is just, "when there are shining virtues and minute defects; "but when it appears that great vices are opposed in "the same mind to as extraordinary virtues, such a "character deserves contempt."

"Perhaps," cried he, "there may be some such "monsters as you describe, of great vices joined to "great virtues; yet in my progress through life I "never yet found one instance of their existence: "on the contrary, I have ever perceived, that where "the mind was capacious, the affections were good. "And indeed Providence seems kindly our friend in "this particular, thus to debilitate the understanding "where the heart is corrupt, and diminish the power, "where there is the will to do mischief. This rule "seems to extend even to other animals: the little "vermin race are ever treacherous, cruel, and cow- "ardly, whilst those endowed with strength and "power are generous, brave, and gentle."

"These observations sound well," returned I, "and yet it would be easy this moment to point out "a man," and I fixed my eye steadfastly upon him, "whose head and heart form a most detestable con- "trast. Ay, Sir," continued I, raising my voice, "and I am glad to have this opportunity of de- "tecting him in the midst of his fancied security. "Do you know this, Sir, this pocket-book?" —— "Yes, Sir," returned he, with a face of impene- trable assurance, "that pocket-book is mine, and "I am glad you have found it." —— "And do you "know," cried I, "this letter? Nay, never falter, "man; but look me full in the face: I say, do you "know this letter?" —— "That letter," —returned he, "yes, it was I that wrote that letter." —— "And how "could you," said I, "so basely, so ungratefully,

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" presume to write this letter?"—" And how came " you," replied he, with looks of unparalleled effrontery, " so basely to presume to break open this letter? " Don't you know, now, I could hang you all for " this? All that I have to do is to swear at the " next justice's, that you have been guilty of breaking " open the lock of my pocket-book, and so hang you " all up at his door." This piece of unexpected insolence raised me to such a pitch, that I could scarcely govern my passion. " Ungrateful wretch, " begone, and no longer pollute my dwelling with " thy baseness: begone, and never let me see thee " again: go from my doors, and the only punishment " I wish thee is an alarmed conscience, which will be " a sufficient tormentor!" so saying, I threw him his pocket-book, which he took up with a smile, and shutting the clasps with the utmost composure, left us, quite astonished at the serenity of his assurance. My wife was particularly enraged that nothing could make him angry, or make him seem ashamed of his villainies. " My dear," cried I, willing to calm those passions that had been raised too high among us, " we are not to be surprised that bad men want " shame; they only blush at being detected in doing " good, but glory in their vices.

" Guilt and Shame, says the allegory, were at " first companions, and in the beginning of their " journey inseparably kept together. But their union " was soon found to be disagreeable and inconvenient " to both; Guilt gave Shame frequent uneasiness, and " Shame often betrayed the secret conspiracies of " Guilt. After long disagreement, therefore, they " at length consented to part for ever. Guilt boldly " walked forward alone, to overtake Fate, that went " before in the shape of an executioner: but Shame, " being naturally timorous, returned back to keep " company with Virtue, which in the beginning of

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"their journey they had left behind. Thus, my "children, after men have travelled through a few "stages in vice, Shame forsakes them, and returns "back to wait upon the few virtues they have still "remaining."

CHAP. XVI.

The family use art, which is opposed with still greater.

WHATEVER might have been Sophia's sensations, the rest of the family was easily consoled for Mr. Burchell's absence by the company of our landlord, whose visits now became more frequent and longer. Though he had been disappointed in procuring my daughters the amusements of the town, as he designed, he took every opportunity of supplying them with those little recreations which our retirement would admit of. He usually came in the morning, and while my son and I followed our occupations abroad, he sate with the family at home, and amused them by describing the town, with every part of which he was particularly acquainted. He could repeat all the observations that were retailed in the atmosphere of the play-houses, and had all the good things of the high wits by rote long before they made their way into the jest-books. The intervals between conversation were employed in teaching my daughters piquet, or sometimes in setting my two little ones to box to make them *sharp*, as he called it: but the hopes of having him for a son-in-law, in some measure blinded us to all his imperfections. It must be owned that my wife

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laid a thousand schemes to entrap him; or, to speak it more tenderly, used every art to magnify the merit of her daughter. If the cakes at tea eat short and crisp, they were made by Olivia: if the gooseberry wine was well knit, the gooseberries were of her gathering: it was her fingers which gave the pickles their peculiar green; and in the composition of a pudding, it was her judgment that mixed the ingredients. Then the poor woman would sometimes tell the 'Squire, that she thought him and Olivia extremely of a size, and would bid both stand up to see which was tallest. These instances of cunning, which she thought impenetrable, yet which every body saw through, were very pleasing to our benefactor, who gave every day some new proofs of his passion, which, though they had not arisen to proposals of marriage, yet we thought fell but little short of it; and his slowness was attributed sometimes to native bashfulness, and sometimes to his fear of offending his uncle. An occurrence, however, which happened soon after, put it beyond a doubt that he designed to become one of our family; my wife even regarded it as an absolute promise.

My wife and daughters happening to return a visit to neighbour Flamborough's, found that family had lately got their pictures drawn by a limner, who travelled the country, and took likenesses for fifteen shillings a head. As this family and ours had long a sort of rivalry in point of taste, our spirit took the alarm at this stolen march upon us, and notwithstanding all I could say, and I said much, it was resolved that we should have our pictures done too. Having, therefore, engaged the limner, for what could I do? our next deliberation was to shew the superiority of our taste in the attitudes. As for our neighbour's family, there were seven of them, and they were drawn with seven oranges, a thing quite out of taste, no variety in life, no composition in the world. We

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desired to have something in a brighter style, and, after many debates, at length came to an unanimous resolution of being drawn together in one large historical family piece. This would be cheaper, since one frame would serve for all, and it would be infinitely more genteel; for all families of any taste were now drawn in the same manner. As we did not immediately recollect an historical subject to hit us, we were contented each with being drawn as independent historical figures. My wife desired to be represented as Venus, and the painter was desired not to be too frugal of his diamonds in her stomacher and hair. Her two little ones were to be as Cupids by her side, while I, in my gown and band, was to present her with my books on the Whistonian controversy. Olivia would be drawn as an Amazon, sitting upon a bank of flowers, dressed in a green Joseph richly laced with gold, and a whip in her hand. Sophia was to be a shepherdess, with as many sheep as the painter could put in for nothing; and Moses was to be dressed out with an hat and white feather. Our taste so much pleased the 'Squire, that he insisted on being put in as one of the family, in the character of Alexander the Great, at Olivia's feet. This was considered by us all as an indication of his desire to be introduced into the family, nor could we refuse his request. The painter was therefore set to work, and as he wrought with assiduity and expedition, in less than four days the whole was completed. The piece was large, and it must be owned he did not spare his colours; for which my wife gave him great encomiums. We were all perfectly satisfied with his performance; but an unfortunate circumstance had not occurred till the picture was finished, which now struck us with dismay. It was so very large that we had no place in the house to fix it. How we all came to disregard so material a point is inconceivable; but certain it is, we had been all greatly remiss. The

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picture, therefore, instead of gratifying our vanity, as we hoped, leaned, in a most mortifying manner, against the kitchen wall, where the canvass was stretched and painted, much too large to be got through any of the doors, and the jest of all our neighbours. One compared it to Robinson Crusoe's long-boat, too large to be removed; another thought it more resembled a reel in a bottle; some wondered how it could be got out, but still more were amazed how it ever got in.

But though it excited the ridicule of some, it effectually raised more malicious suggestions in many. The 'Squire's portrait being found united with ours, was an honour too great to escape envy. Scandalous whispers began to circulate at our expense, and our tranquillity was continually disturbed by persons who came as friends to tell us what was said of us by enemies. These reports we always resented with becoming spirit; but scandal ever improves by opposition.

We once again therefore entered into a consultation upon obviating the malice of our enemies, and at last came to a resolution which had too much cunning to give me entire satisfaction. It was this: as our principal object was to discover the honour of Mr. Thornhill's addresses, my wife undertook to sound him, by pretending to ask his advice in the choice of an husband for her eldest daughter. If this was not found sufficient to induce him to a declaration, it was then resolved to terrify him with a rival. To this last step, however, I would by no means give my consent, till Olivia gave me the most solemn assurances that she would marry the person provided to rival him upon this occasion, if he did not prevent it, by taking her himself. Such was the scheme laid, which, though I did not strenuously oppose, I did not entirely approve.

The next time, therefore, that Mr. Thornhill came to see us, my girls took care to be out of the way, in order to give their mamma an opportunity of putting

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her scheme in execution; but they only retired to the next room, whence they could overhear the whole conversation: my wife artfully introduced it, by observing, that one of the Miss Flamboroughs was like to have a very good match of it in Mr. Spanker. To this the 'Squire assenting, she proceeded to remark, that they who had warm fortunes were always sure of getting good husbands: "But heaven help," continued she, "the girls that have none. What signifies beauty, "Mr. Thornhill? or what signifies all the virtue, and "all the qualifications in the world, in this age of self-"interest? It is not, what is she? but, what has she? "is all the cry."

"Madam," returned he, "I highly approve the "justice, as well as the novelty, of your remarks, and "if I were a king, it should be otherwise. It should "then, indeed, be fine times with the girls without "fortunes: our two young ladies should be the first "for whom I would provide."

"Ah, Sir," returned my wife, "you are pleased "to be facetious: but I wish I were a queen, and "then I know where my eldest daughter should look "for an husband. But now that you have put it "into my head, seriously, Mr. Thornhill, can't you "recommend me a proper husband for her? she is "now nineteen years old, well grown and well edu-"cated, and, in my humble opinion, does not want for "parts."

"Madam," replied he, "if I were to choose, I "would find out a person possessed of every accom-"plishment that can make an angel happy. One "with prudence, fortune, taste, and sincerity; such, "madam, would be, in my opinion, the proper hus-"band." "Ay, Sir," said she, "but do you know "of any such person?"—"No, madam," returned he, "it is impossible to know any person that deserves to "be her husband: she's too great a treasure for one "man's possession: she's a goddess. Upon my soul,

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"I speak what I think, she's an angel."——"Ah, "Mr. Thornhill, you only flatter my poor girl: but "we have been thinking of marrying her to one "of your tenants, whose mother is lately dead, and "who wants a manager: you know whom I mean, "farmer Williams; a warm man, Mr. Thornhill, able "to give her good bread; and who has several times "made her proposals:" (which was actually the case) "but, Sir," concluded she, "I should be glad to "have your approbation of our choice."——"How, "Madam," replied he, "my approbation! My ap-"probation of such a choice! Never. What! Sa-"crifice so much beauty, and sense, and goodness, to "a creature insensible of the blessing! Excuse me, "I can never approve of such a piece of injustice! "And I have my reasons!"——"Indeed, Sir," cried Deborah, "if you have your reasons, that's another "affair; but I should be glad to know those reasons." —"Excuse me, Madam," returned he, "they lie "too deep for discovery:" (laying his hand upon his bosom) "they remain buried, rivetted here."

After he was gone, upon general consultation, we could not tell what to make of these fine sentiments. Olivia considered them as instances of the most exalted passion; but I was not quite so sanguine: it seemed to me pretty plain, that they had more of love, than matrimony, in them: yet, whatever they might portend, it was resolved to prosecute the scheme of farmer Williams, who, from my daughter's first appearance in the country, had paid her his addresses.

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CHAP. XVII.

Scarcely any virtue found to resist the power of long and pleasing temptation.

As I only studied my child's real happiness, the assiduity of Mr. Williams pleased me, as he was in easy circumstances, prudent, and sincere. It required but very little encouragement to revive his former passion; so that in an evening or two he and Mr. Thornhill met at our house, and surveyed each other for some time with looks of anger, but Williams owed his landlord no rent, and little regarded his indignation. Olivia, on her side, acted the coquette to perfection, if that might be called acting which was her real character, pretending to lavish all her tenderness on her new lover. Mr. Thornhill appeared quite dejected at this preference, and with a pensive air took leave, though I own it puzzled me to find him so much in pain as he appeared to be, when he had it in his power so easily to remove the cause, by declaring an honourable passion. But whatever uneasiness he seemed to endure, it could easily be perceived that Olivia's anguish was still greater. After any of these interviews between her lovers, of which there were several, she usually retired to solitude, and there indulged her grief. It was in such a situation I found her one evening, after she had been for some time supporting a fictitious gaiety—"You now see, my child," said I, "that "your confidence in Mr. Thornhill's passion was all "a dream: he permits the rivalry of another, every "way his inferior, though he knows it lies in his "power to secure you to himself by a candid decla-"ration."——"Yes, papa," returned she, "but he

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" has his reasons for this delay: I know he has. The " sincerity of his looks and words convinces me of his " real esteem. A short time, I hope, will discover " the generosity of his sentiments, and convince you " that my opinion of him has been more just than " yours."—" Olivia, my darling," returned I, " every " scheme that has been hitherto pursued to compel " him to a declaration, has been proposed and planned " by yourself, nor can you in the least say that I have " constrained you. But you must not suppose, my " dear, that I will ever be instrumental in suffering " his honest rival to be the dupe of your ill-placed " passion. Whatever time you require to bring your " fancied admirer to an explanation shall be granted; " but at the expiration of that term, if he is still " regardless, I must absolutely insist that honest Mr. " Williams shall be rewarded for his fidelity. The " character which I have hitherto supported in life " demands this from me, and my tenderness as a " parent, shall never influence my integrity as a man. " Name then your day, let it be as distant as you " think proper, and in the mean time take care to " let Mr. Thornhill know the exact time on which I " design delivering you up to another. If he really " loves you, his own good sense will readily suggest " that there is but one method alone to prevent his " losing you for ever."——This proposal, which she could not avoid considering as perfectly just, was readily agreed to. She again renewed her most positive promise of marrying Mr. Williams, in case of the other's insensibility; and at the next opportunity, in Mr. Thornhill's presence, that day month was fixed upon for her nuptials with his rival.

Such vigorous proceedings seemed to redouble Mr. Thornhill's anxiety: but what Olivia really felt gave me some uneasiness. In this struggle between prudence and passion, her vivacity quite forsook her, and every opportunity of solitude was sought, and spent in

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tears. One week passed away; but Mr. Thornhill made no efforts to restrain her nuptials. The succeeding week he was still assiduous; but not more open. On the third he discontinued his visits entirely, and instead of my daughter testifying any impatience, as I expected, she seemed to retain a pensive tranquillity, which I looked upon as resignation. For my own part, I was now sincerely pleased with thinking that my child was going to be secured in a continuance of competence and peace, and frequently applauded her resolution, in preferring happiness to ostentation.

It was within about four days of her intended nuptials, that my little family at night were gathered round a charming fire, telling stories of the past, and laying schemes for the future. Busied in forming a thousand projects, and laughing at whatever folly came uppermost, "Well, Moses," cried I, "we shall "soon, my boy, have a wedding in the family; what "is your opinion of matters and things in general?" —"My opinion, father, is, that all things go on very "well; and I was just now thinking, that when "sister Livy is married to farmer Williams, we shall "then have the loan of his cider-press and brewing-"tubs for nothing."—"That we shall, Moses," cried I, "and he will sing us Death and the Lady, to "raise our spirits, into the bargain."—"He has taught "that song to our Dick," cried Moses, "and I think "he goes through it very prettily."—"Does he so?" cried I, "then let us have it: where's little Dick? "let him up with it boldly."—"My brother Dick," cried Bill, my youngest, "is just gone out with sister "Livy: but Mr. Williams has taught me two songs, "and I'll sing them for you, papa. Which song do "you choose, *the Dying Swan*, or *the Elegy on the* "*Death of a Mad Dog?*"—"The elegy, child, by "all means," said I; "I never heard that yet; and "Deborah, my life, grief you know is dry, let us

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" have a bottle of the best gooseberry wine, to keep
" up our spirits. I have wept so much at all sorts of
" elegies of late, that without an enlivening glass
" I am sure this will overcome me; and Sophy, love,
" take your guitar, and thrum in with the boy a
" little."

AN ELEGY

ON THE

DEATH OF A MAD DOG.

GOOD people all, of every sort,
Give ear unto my song,
And if you find it wondrous short,
It cannot hold you long.

In Islington there was a man,
Of whom the world might say,
That still a godly race he ran,
Whene'er he went to pray.

A kind and gentle heart he had,
To comfort friends and foes;
The naked every day he clad,
When he put on his clothes.

And in that town a dog was found,
As many dogs there be,
Both mungrel, puppy, whelp, and hound,
And curs of low degree.

This dog and man at first were friends;
But when a pique began,
The dog, to gain some private ends,
Went mad, and bit the man.

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Around from all the neighbouring streets
The wondering neighbours ran,
And swore the dog had lost his wits,
To bite so good a man.

The wound it seem'd both sore and sad
To every Christian eye;
And while they swore the dog was mad,
They swore the man would die.

But soon a wonder came to light,
That shew'd the rogues they lied,
The man recover'd of the bite,
The dog it was that died.

"A very good boy, Bill, upon my word, and an "elegy that may truly be called tragical. Come, my "children, here's Bill's health, and may he one day "be a bishop."

"With all my heart," cried my wife; "and if he "but preaches as well as he sings, I make no doubt "of him. The most of his family, by the mother's "side, could sing a good song: it was a common saying "in our country, that the family of the Blenkinsops "could never look straight before them, nor the Hug-"ginsons blow out a candle; that there were none of "the Grograms but could sing a song, or of the Mar-"jorams but could tell a story."——"However that "be," cried I, "the most vulgar ballad of them "all generally pleases me better than the fine modern "odes, and things that petrify us in a single stanza; "productions that we at once detest and praise. Put "the glass to your brother, Moses. The great fault "of these elegiasts is, that they are in despair for "griefs that give the sensible part of mankind very "little pain. A lady loses her muff, her fan, or her "lap-dog, and so the silly poet runs home to versify "the disaster."

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"That may be the mode," cried Moses, "in sub-
"limer compositions; but the Ranelagh songs that
"come down to us are perfectly familiar, and all cast
"in the same mould: Colin meets Dolly, and they
"hold a dialogue together; he gives her a fairing to
"put in her hair, and she presents him with a nose-
"gay; and then they go together to church, where
"they give good advice to young nymphs and swains
"to get married as fast as they can."

"And very good advice too," cried I, "and I am
"told there is not a place in the world where advice
"can be given with so much propriety as there; for,
"as it persuades us to marry, it also furnishes us
"with a wife; and surely that must be an excellent
"market, my boy, where we are told what we want,
"and supplied with it when wanting."

"Yes, Sir," returned Moses, "and I know but
"of two such markets for wives in Europe, Ranelagh
"in England, and Fontarabia in Spain. The Spanish
"market is open once a year, but our English wives
"are saleable every night."

"You are right, my boy," cried his mother, "Old
"England is the only place in the world for husbands
"to get wives."——"And for wives to manage their
"husbands," interrupted I. "It is a proverb abroad,
"that if a bridge were built across the sea, all the
"ladies of the Continent would come over to take
"pattern from ours; for there are no such wives in
"Europe as our own. But let us have one bottle
"more, Deborah, my life, and Moses give us a good
"song. What thanks do we not owe to Heaven for
"thus bestowing tranquillity, health, and competence.
"I think myself happier now than the greatest
"monarch upon earth. He has no such fire-side,
"nor such pleasant faces about it. Yes, Deborah,
"we are now growing old: but the evening of our
"life is likely to be happy. We are descended from
"ancestors that knew no stain, and we shall leave

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"a good and virtuous race of children behind us. "While we live they will be our support and our plea- "sure here, and when we die they will transmit our "honour untainted to posterity. Come, my son, we "wait for a song: let us have a chorus. But where "is my darling Olivia? That little cherub's voice "is always sweetest in the concert."——Just as I spoke Dick came running in, "O papa, papa, she is "gone from us, she is gone from us, my sister Livy "is gone from us for ever"—"Gone, child!" "Yes, "she is gone off with two gentlemen in a post-chaise, "and one of them kissed her, and said he would die "for her; and she cried very much, and was for "coming back; but he persuaded her again, and she "went into the chaise, and said, O what will my "poor papa do when he knows I am undone!"——— "Now then," cried I, "my children, go and be "miserable; for we shall never enjoy one hour more. "And O may Heaven's everlasting fury light upon "him and his! Thus to rob me of my child! And "sure it will, for taking back my sweet innocent that "I was leading up to Heaven. Such sincerity as "my child was possessed of! But all our earthly "happiness is now over! Go, my children, go, and "be miserable and infamous; for my heart is broken "within me!"——"Father," cried my son, "is this "your fortitude?" "Fortitude, child! Yes, he shall "see I have fortitude! Bring me my pistols. I'll "pursue the traitor. While he is on earth I'll pur- "sue him. Old as I am, he shall find I can sting "him yet. The villain! The perfidious villain!" ——I had by this time reached down my pistols, when my poor wife, whose passions were not so strong as mine, caught me in her arms. "My dearest, "dearest husband," cried she, "the Bible is the only "weapon that is fit for your old hands now. Open "that, my love, and read our anguish into patience, "for she has vilely deceived us."——"Indeed, Sir,"

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resumed my son, after a pause, "your rage is too "violent and unbecoming. You should be my "mother's comforter, and you increase her pain. "It ill suited you and your reverend character, thus "to curse your greatest enemy: you should not have "cursed him, villain as he is."——"I did not curse "him, child, did I?"——"Indeed, Sir, you did; "you cursed him twice."——"Then may Heaven "forgive me and him if I did. And now, my son, "I see it was more than human benevolence that "first taught us to bless our enemies! Blessed be his "holy name for all the good he hath given, and for "all that he hath taken away! But it is not, it is "not a small distress that can wring tears from these "old eyes, that have not wept for so many years. "My child!—To undo my darling! May confusion "seize——Heaven forgive me, what am I about "to say! You may remember, my love, how good "she was, and how charming; till this vile moment "all her care was to make us happy. Had she but "died! But she is gone, the honour of our family "contaminated, and I must look out for happiness "in other worlds than here. But, my child, you saw "them go off: perhaps he forced her away? If he "forced her, she may yet be innocent."—"Ah no, "Sir!" cried the child; "he only kissed her, and "called her his angel, and she wept very much, and "leaned upon his arm, and they drove off very fast." ——"She's an ungrateful creature," cried my wife, who could scarcely speak for weeping, "to use us "thus. She never had the least constraint put upon "her affections. The vile strumpet has basely de- "serted her parents without any provocation—thus to "bring your gray hairs to the grave, and I must "shortly follow."

In this manner that night, the first of our real misfortunes, was spent in the bitterness of complaint, and ill-supported sallies of enthusiasm. I deter-

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mined, however, to find out our betrayer, wherever he was, and reproach his baseness. The next morning we missed our wretched child at breakfast, where she used to give life and cheerfulness to us all. My wife, as before, attempted to ease her heart by reproaches. "Never," cried she, "shall that vilest "stain of our family again darken these harmless "doors. I will never call her daughter more. No, "let the strumpet live with her vile seducer: she "may bring us to shame, but she shall never more "deceive us."

"Wife," said I, "do not talk thus hardly: my "detestation of her guilt is as great as yours; but "ever shall this house and this heart be open to a "poor returning repentant sinner. The sooner she "returns from her transgression, the more welcome "shall she be to me. For the first time the very "best may err; art may persuade, and novelty spread "out its charm. The first fault is the child of "simplicity; but every other the offspring of guilt. "Yes, the wretched creature shall be welcome to "this heart and this house, though stained with "ten thousand vices. I will again hearken to the "music of her voice, again will I hang fondly on "her bosom, if I find but repentance there. My "son, bring hither my bible and my staff; I will "pursue her, wherever she is, and though I cannot "save her from shame, I may prevent the continu-"ance of iniquity."

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CHAP. XVIII.

The pursuit of a father to reclaim a lost child to virtue.

THOUGH the child could not describe the gentleman's person who handed his sister into the post-chaise, yet my suspicions fell entirely upon our young landlord, whose character for such intrigues was but too well known. I therefore directed my steps towards Thornhill-castle, resolving to upbraid him, and, if possible, to bring back my daughter: but before I had reached his seat, I was met by one of my parishioners, who said he saw a young lady resembling my daughter, in a post-chaise with a gentleman, whom, by the description, I could only guess to be Mr. Burchell, and that they drove very fast. This information, however, did by no means satisfy me. I therefore went to the young 'Squire's, and though it was yet early, insisted upon seeing him immediately: he soon appeared with the most open familiar air, and seemed perfectly amazed at my daughter's elopement, protesting upon his honour that he was quite a stranger to it. I now therefore condemned my former suspicions, and could turn them only on Mr. Burchell, who, I recollected, had of late several private conferences with her: but the appearance of another witness left me no room to doubt of his villainy, who averred, that he and my daughter were actually gone towards the Wells, about thirty miles off, where there was a great deal of company. Being driven to that state of mind in which we are more ready to act precipitately than to reason right, I never debated

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with myself, whether these accounts might not have been given by persons purposely placed in my way to mislead me, but resolved to pursue my daughter and her fancied deluder thither. I walked along with earnestness, and inquired of several by the way; but received no accounts, till, entering the town, I was met by a person on horseback, whom I remembered to have seen at the 'Squire's, and he assured me, that if I followed them to the races, which were but thirty miles farther, I might depend upon overtaking them, for he had seen them dance there the night before, and the whole assembly seemed charmed with my daughter's performance. Early the next day I walked forward to the races, and about four in the afternoon I came upon the course. The company made a very brilliant appearance, all earnestly employed in one pursuit, that of pleasure; how different from mine, that of reclaiming a lost child to virtue! I thought I perceived Mr. Burchell at some distance from me; but, as if he dreaded an interview, upon my approaching him, he mixed among a crowd, and I saw him no more. I now reflected that it would be to no purpose to continue my pursuit farther, and resolved to return home to an innocent family, who wanted my assistance. But the agitations of my mind, and the fatigues I had undergone, threw me into a fever, the symptoms of which I perceived before I came off the course. This was another unexpected stroke, as I was more than seventy miles distant from home: however, I retired to a little ale-house by the road-side, and in this place, the usual retreat of indigence and frugality, I laid me down patiently to wait the issue of my disorder. I languished here for nearly three weeks; but at last my constitution prevailed, though I was unprovided with money to defray the expenses of my entertainment. It is possible the anxiety from this last circumstance alone might have brought on

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a relapse, had I not been supplied by a traveller, who stopped to take a cursory refreshment. This person was no other than the philanthropic bookseller in St. Paul's church-yard, who has written so many little books for children: he called himself their friend; but he was the friend of all mankind. He was no sooner alighted, but he was in haste to be gone; for he was ever on business of the utmost importance, and was at that time actually compiling materials for the history of one Mr. Thomas Trip. I immediately recollected this good-natured man's red pimpled face; for he had published for me against the Deuterogamists of the age, and from him I borrowed a few pieces, to be paid at my return. Leaving the inn, therefore, as I was yet but weak, I resolved to return home by easy journeys of ten miles a day. My health and usual tranquillity were almost restored, and I now condemned that pride which had made me refractory to the hand of correction. Man little knows what calamities are beyond his patience to bear till he tries them: as in ascending the heights of ambition, which look bright from below, every step we rise shews us some new and gloomy prospect of hidden disappointment; so in our descent from the summits of pleasure, though the vale of misery below may appear at first dark and gloomy, yet the busy mind, still attentive to its own amusement, finds as we descend something to flatter and to please. Still, as we approach, the darkest objects appear to brighten, and the mental eye becomes adapted to its gloomy situation.

I now proceeded forward, and had walked about two hours, when I perceived what appeared at a distance like a waggon, which I was resolved to overtake; but when I came up to it found it to be a strolling company's cart, that was carrying their scenes and other theatrical furniture to the next village, where they were to exhibit. The cart was

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attended only by the person who drove it, and one of the company, as the rest of the players were to follow the ensuing day. Good company upon the road, says the proverb, is the shortest cut, I therefore entered into conversation with the poor player; and as I once had some theatrical powers myself, I disserted on such topics with my usual freedom: but as I was pretty much unacquainted with the present state of the stage, I demanded who were the present theatrical writers in vogue, who the Drydens and Otways of the day. —— "I fancy, Sir," cried the player, "few of our modern dramatists would think "themselves much honoured by being compared to "the writers you mention. Dryden's and Rowe's "manner, Sir, are quite out of fashion; our taste "has gone back a whole century, Fletcher, Ben "Jonson, and all the plays of Shakspeare, are the "only things that go down." —— "How," cried I, "is it possible the present age can be pleased "with that antiquated dialect, that obsolete humour, "those over-charged characters, which abound in "the works you mention?" —— "Sir," returned "my companion, "the public think nothing about "dialect, or humour, or character; for that is none of "their business, they only go to be amused, and find "themselves happy when they can enjoy a pantomime "under the sanction of Jonson's or Shakspeare's "name." —— "So then, I suppose," cried I, "that our "modern dramatists are rather imitators of Shak-"speare than of nature." —— "To say the truth," re-"turned my companion, "I don't know that they imi-"tate any thing at all; nor indeed does the public "require it of them: it is not the composition of the "piece, but the number of starts and attitudes that "may be introduced into it, that elicits applause. I "have known a piece, with not one jest in the "whole, shrugged into popularity, and another "saved by the poet's throwing in a fit of the gripes.

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" No, Sir, the works of Congreve and Farquhar have " too much wit in them for the present taste; our " modern dialect is much more natural."

By this time the equipage of the strolling company was arrived at the village, which, it seems, had been apprised of our approach, and was come out to gaze at us; for my companion observed, that strollers always have more spectators without doors than within. I did not consider the impropriety of my being in such company till I saw a mob gather about me. I therefore took shelter, as fast as possible, in the first ale-house that offered, and being shewn into the common room, was accosted by a very well-dressed gentleman, who demanded whether I was the real chaplain of the company, or whether it was only to be my masquerade character in the play. Upon my informing him of the truth, and that I did not belong in any sort to the company, he was condescending enough to desire me and the player to partake in a bowl of punch, over which he discussed modern politics with great earnestness and interest. I set him down in my own mind for nothing less than a parliament-man at least; but was almost confirmed in my conjectures, when, upon asking what there was in the house for supper, he insisted that the player and I should sup with him at his house; with which request, after some entreaties, we were prevailed on to comply.

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CHAP. XIX.

The description of a person discontented with the present government, and apprehensive of the loss of our liberties.

THE house where we were to be entertained lying at a small distance from the village, our inviter observed, that as the coach was not ready, he would conduct us on foot, and we soon arrived at one of the most magnificent mansions I had seen in that part of the country. The apartment into which we were shewn was perfectly elegant and modern; he went to give orders for supper, while the player, with a wink, observed that we were perfectly in luck. Our entertainer soon returned, an elegant supper was brought in, two or three ladies in easy dishabille were introduced, and the conversation began with some sprightliness. Politics, however, were the subject on which our entertainer chiefly expatiated: for he asserted that liberty was at once his boast and his terror. After the cloth was removed, he asked me if I had seen the last Monitor, to which replying in the negative, "What! nor the Auditor, I suppose?" cried he. "Neither, Sir," returned I. "That's "strange, very strange," replied my entertainer. "Now I read all the politics that come out. The "Daily, the Public, the Ledger, the Chronicle, the "London Evening, the Whitehall Evening, the "seventeen magazines, and the two Reviews; and "though they hate each other, I love them all. "Liberty, Sir, liberty is the Briton's boast, and by "all my coal-mines in Cornwall, I reverence its "guardians." "Then it is to be hoped," cried I,

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"you reverence the king." "Yes," returned my entertainer, "when he does what we would have him; "but if he goes on as he has done of late, I'll never "trouble myself more with his matters. I say "nothing. I think only. I could have directed "some things better. I don't think there has been "a sufficient number of advisers: he should advise "with every person willing to give him advice, and "then we should have things done in another guess "manner."

"I wish," cried I, "that such intruding advisers "were fixed in the pillory. It should be the duty "of honest men to assist the weaker side of our constitution, that sacred power that has for some years "been every day declining, and losing its due share "of influence in the state. But these ignorants still "continue the same cry of liberty, and if they have "any weight, basely throw it into the subsiding "scale."

"How," cried one of the ladies, "do I live to "see one so base, so sordid, as to be an enemy to "liberty, and a defender of tyrants? Liberty, that "sacred gift of heaven, that glorious privilege of "Britons!"

"Can it be possible," cried our entertainer, "that "there should be any found at present advocates "for slavery? Any who are for meanly giving up "the privileges of Britons? Can any, Sir, be so "abject?"

"No, Sir," replied I, "I am for liberty, that "attribute of Gods! Glorious liberty! that theme "of modern declamation. I would have all men "kings. I would be a king myself. We have all "naturally an equal right to the throne; we are all "originally equal. This is my opinion, and was "once the opinion of a set of honest men who were "called Levellers. They tried to erect themselves "into a community, where all should be equally

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" free. But, alas! it would never answer; for there " were some among them stronger, and some more " cunning than others, and these became masters of " the rest; for as sure as your groom rides your " horses, because he is a cunninger animal than they, " so surely will the animal that is cunninger or " stronger than he, sit upon his shoulders in turn. " Since then it is entailed upon humanity to submit, " and some are born to command, and others to obey, " the question is, as there must be tyrants, whether " it is better to have them in the same house with us, " or in the same village, or still farther off, in the " metropolis. Now, Sir, for my own part, as I natu- " rally hate the face of a tyrant, the farther off he is " removed from me, the better pleased am I. The " generality of mankind also are of my way of think- " ing, and have unanimously created one king, whose " election at once diminishes the number of tyrants, " and puts tyranny at the greatest distance from the " greatest number of people. Now the great, who " were tyrants themselves before the election of one " tyrant, are naturally averse to a power raised over " them, and whose weight must ever lean heaviest on " the subordinate orders. It is the interest of the " great, therefore, to diminish kingly power as much " as possible; because whatever they take from that " is naturally restored to themselves; and all they " have to do in the state, is to undermine the single " tyrant, by which they resume their primæval autho- " rity. Now the state may be so circumstanced, or " its laws may be so disposed, or its men of opulence " so minded, as all to conspire in carrying on this " business of undermining monarchy. For, in the " first place, if the circumstances of our state be such " as to favour the accumulation of wealth, and make " the opulent still more rich, this will increase their " ambition. An accumulation of wealth, however, " must necessarily be the consequence, when, as at

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" present, more riches flow in from external commerce
" than arise from internal industry; for external com-
" merce can only be managed to advantage by the
" rich, and they have also at the same time all the
" emoluments arising from internal industry; so that
" the rich, with us, have two sources of wealth, whereas
" the poor have but one. For this reason, wealth, in
" all commercial states, is found to accumulate, and
" all such have hitherto in time become aristocratical.
" Again, the very laws also of this country may con-
" tribute to the accumulation of wealth; as when by
" their means the natural ties that bind the rich and
" poor together are broken, and it is ordained that
" the rich shall only marry with the rich; or when
" the learned are held unqualified to serve their
" country as counsellors merely from a defect of opu-
" lence, and wealth is thus made the object of a wise
" man's ambition; by these means I say, and such
" means as these, riches will accumulate. Now the
" possessor of accumulated wealth, when furnished
" with the necessaries and pleasures of life, has no
" other method to employ the superfluity of his for-
" tune but in purchasing power. That is, differently
" speaking, in making dependants, by purchasing the
" liberty of the needy or the venal, of men who are
" willing to bear the mortification of contiguous
" tyranny for bread. Thus each very opulent man
" generally gathers round him a circle of the poorest
" of the people; and the polity abounding in accu-
" mulated wealth, may be compared to a Cartesian
" system, each orb with a vortex of its own. Those,
" however, who are willing to move in a great man's
" vortex, are only such as must be slaves, the rabble
" of mankind, whose souls and whose education are
" adapted to servitude, and who know nothing of
" liberty except the name. But there must still be a
" large number of the people without the sphere of
" the opulent man's influence, namely, that order of

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" men which subsists between the very rich and the
" very rabble; those men who are possessed of too
" large fortunes to submit to the neighbouring man
" in power, and yet are too poor to set up for tyranny
" themselves. In this middle order of mankind are
" generally to be found all the arts, wisdom, and
" virtues, of society. This order alone is known to
" be the true preserver of freedom, and may be called
" the People. Now it may happen that this middle
" order of mankind may lose all its influence in a
" state, and its voice be in a manner drowned in that
" of the rabble: for if the fortune sufficient for qua-
" lifying a person at present to give his voice in state
" affairs be ten times less than was judged sufficient
" upon forming the constitution, it is evident that
" greater numbers of the rabble will thus be intro-
" duced into the political system, and they, ever moving
" in the vortex of the great, will follow where great-
" ness shall direct. In such a state, therefore, all that
" the middle order has left, is to preserve the prero-
" gative and privileges of the one principal governor
" with the most sacred circumspection. For he divides
" the power of the rich, and calls off the great from
" falling with tenfold weight on the middle order
" placed beneath them. The middle order may be
" compared to a town of which the opulent are forming
" the siege, and of which the governor from without
" is hastening the relief. While the besiegers are in
" dread of an enemy over them, it is but natural to
" offer the townsmen the most specious terms; to
" flatter them with sounds, and amuse them with pri-
" vileges; but if they once defeat the governor from
" behind, the walls of the town will be but a small
" defence to its inhabitants. What they may then
" expect, may be seen by turning our eyes to Holland,
" Genoa, or Venice, where the laws govern the poor,
" and the rich govern the law. I am then for, and
" would die for, monarchy, sacred monarchy; for if

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" there be any thing sacred amongst men, it must be " the anointed SOVEREIGN of his people, and every " diminution of his power in war, or in peace, is an " infringement upon the real liberties of the subject. " The sounds of liberty, patriotism, and Britons, have " already done *much;* it is to be hoped that the true " sons of freedom will prevent their ever doing more. " I have known many of those pretended champions " for liberty in my time, yet do I not remember one " that was not in his heart and in his family a tyrant."

My warmth, I found, had lengthened this harangue beyond the rules of good breeding: but the impatience of my entertainer, who often strove to interrupt it, could be restrained no longer. " What," cried he, " then I have been all this while entertaining a Jesuit " in parson's clothes; but by all the coal-mines of " Cornwall, out he shall pack, if my name be Wilkin- " son." I now found I had gone too far, and asked pardon for the warmth with which I had spoken. " Pardon," returned he in a fury, " I think such " principles demand ten thousand pardons. What, " give up liberty, property, and, as the Gazetteer says, " lie down to be saddled with wooden shoes! Sir, I " insist upon your marching out of this house imme- " diately, to prevent worse consequences, Sir, I insist " upon it." I was going to repeat my remonstrances: but just then we heard a footman's rap at the door, and the two ladies cried out, " As sure as death there " is our master and mistress come home." It seems my entertainer was all this while only the butler, who, in his master's absence, had a mind to cut a figure, and be for a while the gentleman himself; and, to say the truth, he talked politics as well as most country gentlemen do. But nothing could now exceed my confusion upon seeing the gentleman and his lady enter, nor was their surprise, at finding such company and good cheer, less than ours. " Gentlemen," cried the real master of the house to me and my companion,

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" my wife and I are your most humble servants; but " I protest this is so unexpected a favour, that we " almost sink under the obligation." However unexpected our company might be to them, theirs, I am sure, was still more so to us, and I was struck dumb with the apprehensions of my own absurdity, when whom should I next see enter the room but my dear Miss Arabella Wilmot, who was formerly designed to be married to my son George, but whose match was broken off as already related. As soon as she saw me, she flew to my arms with the utmost joy.—— " My dear Sir," cried she, " to what happy accident " is it that we owe so unexpected a visit? I am " sure my uncle and aunt will be in raptures when " they find they have the good Dr. Primrose for their " guest." Upon hearing my name, the old gentleman and lady very politely stepped up, and welcomed me with most cordial hospitality. Nor could they forbear smiling upon being informed of the nature of my present visit: but the unfortunate butler, whom they at first seemed disposed to turn away, was at my intercession forgiven.

Mr. Arnold and his lady, to whom the house belonged, now insisted upon having the pleasure of my stay for some days, and as their niece, my charming pupil, whose mind in some measure had been formed under my own instructions, joined in their entreaties, I complied. That night I was shewn to a magnificent chamber, and the next morning early Miss Wilmot desired to walk with me in the garden, which was decorated in the modern manner. After some time spent in pointing out the beauties of the place, she enquired with seeming unconcern, when last I had heard from my son George. " Alas! " Madam," cried I, " he has now been nearly three " years absent, without ever writing to his friends or " me. Where he is I know not; perhaps I shall " never see him or happiness more. No, my dear

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" Madam, we shall never more see such pleasing hours " as were once spent by our fire-side at Wakefield. " My little family are now dispersing very fast, and " poverty has brought not only want, but infamy upon " us." The good-natured girl let fall a tear at this account; but as I saw her possessed of too much sensibility, I forebore a more minute detail of our sufferings. It was, however, some consolation to me to find that time had made no alteration in her affections, and that she had rejected several offers that had been made her since our leaving her part of the country. She led me round all the extensive improvements of the place, pointing to the several walks and arbours, and at the same time catching from every object a hint for some new question relative to my son. In this manner we spent the forenoon, till the bell summoned us in to dinner, where we found the manager of the strolling company that I mentioned before, who was come to dispose of tickets for the Fair Penitent, which was to be acted that evening, the part of Horatio by a young gentleman who had never appeared on any stage. He seemed to be very warm in the praises of the new performer, and averred that he never saw any who bid so fair for excellence. Acting, he observed, was not learned in a day; " But this gentleman," continued he, " seems born to tread the stage. His voice, his " figure, and attitudes, are all admirable. We caught " him up accidentally in our journey down." This account, in some measure, excited our curiosity, and at the entreaty of the ladies, I was prevailed upon to accompany them to the play-house, which was no other than a barn. As the company with which I went was incontestably the chief of the place, we were received with the greatest respect, and placed in the front seat of the theatre, where we sate for some time with no small impatience to see Horatio make his appearance. The new performer advanced at last, and let parents think of my sensations by their own,

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when I found it was my unfortunate son. He was going to begin, when turning his eyes upon the audience, he perceived Miss Wilmot and me, and stood at once speechless and immovable. The actors behind the scene, who ascribed this pause to his natural timidity, attempted to encourage him; but instead of going on, he burst into a flood of tears, and retired off the stage. I don't know what were my feelings on this occasion; for they succeeded with too much rapidity for description: but I was soon awaked from this disagreeable reverie by Miss Wilmot, who, pale and with a trembling voice, desired me to conduct her back to her uncle's. When got home, Mr. Arnold, who was as yet a stranger to our extraordinary behaviour, being informed that the new performer was my son, sent his coach and an invitation for him; and as he persisted in his refusal to appear again upon the stage, the players put another in his place, and we soon had him with us. Mr. Arnold gave him the kindest reception, and I received him with my usual transport; for I could never counterfeit false resentment. Miss Wilmot's reception was mixed with seeming neglect, and yet I could perceive she acted a studied part. The tumult in her mind seemed not yet abated: she said twenty giddy things that looked like joy, and then laughed loud at her own want of meaning. At intervals she would take a sly peep at the glass, as if happy in the consciousness of irresistible beauty, and often would ask questions without giving any manner of attention to the answers.

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CHAP. XX.

The history of a philosophic vagabond pursuing novelty, but losing content.

AFTER we had supped, Mrs. Arnold politely offered to send a couple of her footmen for my son's baggage, which he at first seemed to decline; but upon her pressing the request, he was obliged to inform her, that a stick and a wallet were all the movable things upon this earth that he could boast of. "Why, ay, "my son," cried I, "you left me but poor, and poor "I find you are come back; and yet I make no "doubt you have seen a great deal of the world."— "Yes, Sir," replied my son, "but travelling after "fortune is not the way to secure her; and indeed "of late I have desisted from the pursuit."——"I "fancy, Sir," cried Mrs. Arnold, "that the account "of your adventures would be amusing: the first "part of them I have often heard from my niece; "but could the company prevail for the rest, it "would be an additional obligation."——"Madam," replied my son, "I promise you the pleasure you "have in hearing, will not be half so great as my "vanity in repeating them, and yet in the whole "narrative I can scarcely promise you one adventure, "as my account is rather of what I saw than what I "did. The first misfortune of my life, which you "all know, was great; but though it distressed, it "could not sink me. No person ever had a better "knack at hoping than I. The less kind I found "fortune at one time, the more I expected from her "another, and being now at the bottom of her wheel,

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"every new revolution might lift, but could not "depress me. I proceeded, therefore, towards Lon- "don in a fine morning, no way uneasy about to- "morrow, but cheerful as the birds that carolled by "the road; and comforted myself with reflecting, that "London was the mart where abilities of every kind "were sure of meeting distinction and reward.

"Upon my arrival in town, Sir, my first care was "to deliver your letter of recommendation to our "cousin, who was himself in little better circum- "stances than I. My first scheme, you know, Sir, "was to be usher at an academy, and I asked his "advice on the affair. Our cousin received the "proposal with a true Sardonic grin. Ay, cried "he, this is indeed a very pretty career that has "been chalked out for you. I have been an usher "at a boarding-school myself; and may I die by an "anodyne necklace, but I had rather be an under- "turnkey in Newgate. I was up early and late; I "was brow-beat by the master, hated for my ugly "face by the mistress, worried by the boys within, "and never permitted to stir out to meet civility "abroad. But are you sure you are fit for a school? "Let me examine you a little. Have you been bred "apprentice to the business? No. Then you won't "do for a school. Can you dress the boys' hair? "No. Then you won't do for a school. Have you "had the small-pox? No. Then you won't do for a "school. Can you lie three in a bed? No. Then "you will never do for a school. Have you got a "good stomach? Yes. Then you will by no means "do for a school. No, Sir, if you are for a genteel "easy profession, bind yourself seven years as an "apprentice to turn a cutler's wheel; but avoid a "school by any means. Yet come, continued he, I "see you are a lad of spirit and some learning, what "do you think of commencing author, like me? You

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" have read in books, no doubt, of men of genius " starving at the trade: At present I'll shew you " forty very dull fellows about town that live by it in " opulence. All honest jogtrot men, who go on " smoothly and dully, and write history and politics, " and are praised: men, Sir, who, had they been bred " cobblers, would all their lives have only mended " shoes, but never made them.

" Finding that there was no great degree of gen- " tility affixed to the character of an usher, I resolved " to accept his proposal; and having the highest " respect for literature, hailed the *antiqua Mater* of " Grub Street with reverence. I thought it my " glory to pursue a track which Dryden and Otway " trod before me. I considered the goddess of this " region as the parent of excellence; and however an " intercourse with the world might give us good sense, " the poverty she entailed I supposed to be the nurse " of genius! Big with these reflections, I sate down, " and finding that the best things remained to be " said on the wrong side, I resolved to write a book " that should be wholly new. I therefore dressed " up three paradoxes with some ingenuity. They " were false, indeed, but they were new. The jewels " of truth have been so often imported by others, " that nothing was left for me to import but some " splendid things that at a distance looked every bit as " well. Witness, you powers, what fancied import- " ance sate perched upon my quill while I was writing. " The whole learned world, I made no doubt, would " rise to oppose my systems; but then I was prepared " to oppose the whole learned world. Like the por- " cupine I sate self-collected, with a quill pointed " against every opposer."

" Well said, my boy," cried I, " and what subject " did you treat upon? I hope you did not pass over " the importance of Monogamy. But I interrupt,

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"go on; you published your paradoxes; well, and "what did the learned world say to your paradoxes?"

"Sir," replied my son, "the learned world said "nothing to my paradoxes; nothing at all, Sir. Every "man of them was employed in praising his friends "and himself, or condemning his enemies: and, un- "fortunately, as I had neither, I suffered the cruellest "mortification, neglect.

"As I was meditating one day in a coffee-house "on the fate of my paradoxes, a little man happen- "ing to enter the room, placed himself in the box "before me, and after some preliminary discourse, "finding me to be a scholar, drew out a bundle "of proposals, begging me to subscribe to a new "edition he was going to give to the world of Pro- "pertius with notes. This demand necessarily pro- "duced a reply that I had no money; and that "concession led him to enquire into the nature of "my expectations. Finding that my expectations "were just as great as my purse, I see, cried he, you "are unacquainted with the town, I'll teach you a "part of it. Look at these proposals, upon these "very proposals I have subsisted very comfortably for "twelve years. The moment a nobleman returns "from his travels, a Creolian arrives from Jamaica, "or a dowager from her country seat, I strike for a "subscription. I first besiege their hearts with flat- "tery, and then pour in my proposals at the breach. "If they subscribe readily the first time, I renew "my request to beg a dedication fee. If they let "me have that, I smite them once more for en- "graving their coat of arms at the top. Thus, "continued he, I live by vanity, and laugh at it. "But, between ourselves, I am now too well known, "I should be glad to borrow your face a bit; a no- "bleman of distinction has just returned from Italy; "my face is familiar to his porter; but if you bring

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" this copy of verses, my life for it you succeed, and " we divide the spoil."

" Bless us, George," cried I, " and is this the em- " ployment of poets now! Do men of their exalted " talents thus stoop to beggary! Can they so far " disgrace their calling, as to make a vile traffic of " praise for bread?"

" Oh no, Sir," returned he, " a true poet can never " be so base; for wherever there is genius there is " pride. The creatures I now describe are only beg- " gars in rhyme. The real poet, as he braves every " hardship for fame, so he is equally a coward to con- " tempt, and none but those who are unworthy pro- " tection condescend to solicit it.

" Having a mind too proud to stoop to such in- " dignities, and yet a fortune too humble to hazard a " second attempt for fame, I was now obliged to take " a middle course, and write for bread. But I was " unqualified for a profession where mere industry " alone was to ensure success. I could not suppress " my lurking passion for applause; but usually con- " sumed that time in efforts after excellence which " takes up but little room, when it should have been " more advantageously employed in the diffusive pro- " ductions of fruitful mediocrity. My little piece " would therefore come forth in the midst of periodical " publications, unnoticed and unknown. The public " were more importantly employed, than to observe " the easy simplicity of my style, or the harmony of " my periods. Sheet after sheet was thrown off to " oblivion. My essays were buried among the essays " upon liberty, eastern tales, and cures for the bite of " a mad dog: while Philautos, Philalethes, Philelu- " theros, and Philanthropos, all wrote better, because " they wrote faster, than I.

" Now, therefore, I began to associate with none " but disappointed authors, like myself, who praised,

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" deplored, and despised each other. The satisfaction " we found in every celebrated writer's attempts, was " inversely as their merits. I found that no genius " in another could please me. My unfortunate para- " doxes had entirely dried up that source of comfort. " I could neither read nor write with satisfaction; for " excellence in another was my aversion, and writing " was my trade.

" In the midst of these gloomy reflections, as I was " one day sitting on a bench in St. James's Park, a " young gentleman of distinction, who had been my " intimate acquaintance at the university, approached " me. We saluted each other with some hesitation, " he almost ashamed of being known to one who " made so shabby an appearance, and I afraid of a " repulse. But my suspicions soon vanished; for " Ned Thornhill was at the bottom a very good- " natured fellow."

" What did you say, George?" interrupted I.—— " Thornhill, was not that his name? It can cer- " tainly be no other than my landlord."—— " Bless " me," cried Mrs. Arnold, " is Mr. Thornhill so " near a neighbour of yours? He has long been a " friend in our family, and we expect a visit from " him shortly."

" My friend's first care," continued my son, " was " to alter my appearance by a very fine suit of his " own clothes, and then I was admitted to his table, " upon the footing of half-friend, half-underling. " My business was to attend him at auctions, to put " him in spirits when he sate for his picture, to take " the left hand in his chariot when not filled by " another, and to assist at tattering a kip, as the " phrase was, when we had a mind for a frolic. Be- " sides this, I had twenty other little employments " in the family. I was to do many small things " without bidding; to carry the cork-screw; to " stand godfather to all the butler's children; to sing

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" when I was bid; to be never out of humour;
" always to be humble, and, if I could, to be very
" happy.

" In this honourable post, however, I was not
" without a rival. A captain of marines, who was
" formed for the place by nature, opposed me in my
" patron's affections. His mother had been laun-
" dress to a man of quality, and thus he early ac-
" quired a taste for pimping and pedigree. As this
" gentleman made it the study of his life to be ac-
" quainted with lords, though he was dismissed from
" several for his stupidity, yet he found many of
" them who were as dull as himself, that permitted
" his assiduities. As flattery was his trade, he prac-
" tised it with the easiest address imaginable; but it
" came awkward and stiff from me; and as every
" day my patron's desire of flattery increased, so every
" hour being better acquainted with his defects, I
" became more unwilling to give it. Thus I was
" once more fairly going to give up the field to the
" captain, when my friend found occasion for my as-
" sistance. This was nothing less than to fight a
" duel for him, with a gentleman whose sister it was
" pretended he had used ill. I readily complied with
" his request; and though I see you are displeased
" at my conduct, yet as it was a debt indispensably
" due to friendship, I could not refuse. I undertook
" the affair, disarmed my antagonist, and soon after
" had the pleasure of finding that the lady was only
" a woman of the town, and the fellow her bully and
" a sharper. This piece of service was repaid with
" the warmest professions of gratitude; but as my
" friend was to leave town in a few days, he knew no
" other method of serving me, but by recommending
" me to his uncle Sir William Thornhill, and another
" nobleman of great distinction who enjoyed a post
" under the government. When he was gone, my first
" care was to carry his recommendatory letter to his

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" uncle, a man whose character for every virtue was " universal, yet just. I was received by his servants " with the most hospitable smiles; for the looks of " the domestics ever transmit their master's benevo- " lence. Being shewn into a grand apartment, where " Sir William soon came to me, I delivered my " message and letter, which he read, and after paus- " ing some minutes, Pray, Sir, cried he, inform " me what you have done for my kinsman to deserve " this warm recommendation? But I suppose, Sir, " I guess your merits, you have fought for him; " and so you would expect a reward from me for " being the instrument of his vices. I wish, sincerely " wish, that my present refusal may be some punish- " ment for your guilt; but still more, that it may be " some inducement to your repentance. —— The " severity of this rebuke I bore patiently, because I " knew it was just. My whole expectations, now " therefore, lay in my letter to the great man. As " the doors of the nobility are almost ever beset with " beggars, all ready to thrust in some sly petition, " I found it no easy matter to gain admittance. " However, after bribing the servants with half my " worldly fortune, I was at last shewn into a spacious " apartment, my letter being previously sent up for " his lordship's inspection. During this anxious in- " terval I had full time to look round me. Every " thing was grand and of happy contrivance: the " paintings, the furniture, the gildings, petrified me " with awe, and raised my idea of the owner. Ah, " thought I to myself, how very great must the pos- " sessor of all these things be, who carries in his " head the business of the state, and whose house " displays half the wealth of a kingdom: sure his " genius must be unfathomable! During these aw- " ful reflections I heard a step come heavily forward. " Ah, this is the great man himself! No, it was " only a chambermaid. Another foot was heard soon

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" after. This must be he! No, it was only the " great man's valet de chambre. At last his lordship " actually made his appearance. Are you, cried he, " the bearer of this here letter? I answered with a " bow. I learn by this, continued he, as how that— " But just at that instant a servant delivered him a " card; and without taking farther notice, he went " out of the room, and left me to digest my own hap- " piness at leisure. I saw no more of him, till told " by a footman that his lordship was going to his " coach at the door. Down I immediately followed, " and joined my voice to that of three or four more, " who came, like me, to petition for favours. His " lordship, however, went too fast for us, and was " gaining his chariot door with large strides, when I " hallooed out to know if I was to have any reply. " He was by this time got in, and muttered an an- " swer, half of which only I heard, the other half " was lost in the rattling of his chariot wheels. I " stood for some time with my neck stretched out, " in the posture of one that was listening to catch the " glorious sounds, till, looking round me, I found " myself alone at his lordship's gate.

" My patience," continued my son, " was now quite " exhausted: stung with the thousand indignities I " had met with, I was willing to cast myself away, " and only wanted the gulf to receive me. I re- " garded myself as one of those vile things that na- " ture designed should be thrown by into her lumber- " room, there to perish in obscurity. I had still " however half a guinea left, and of that I thought " fortune herself should not deprive me: but in order " to be sure of this, I was resolved to go instantly " and spend it while I had it, and then trust to oc- " currences for the rest. As I was going along with " this resolution, it happened that Mr. Crispe's office " seemed invitingly open to give me a welcome re- " ception. In this office Mr. Crispe kindly offers all

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" his majesty's subjects a generous promise of 30*l.* a " year, for which promise all they give in return is " their liberty for life, and permission to let him " transport them to America as slaves. I was happy " at finding a place where I could lose my fears in " desperation, and entered this cell, for it had the " appearance of one, with the devotion of a monastic. " Here I found a number of poor creatures, all in " circumstances like myself, expecting the arrival of " Mr. Crispe, presenting a true epitome of English " impatience. Each untractable soul at variance " with fortune, wreaked her injuries on their own " hearts: but Mr. Crispe at last came down and all " our murmurs were hushed. He deigned to regard " me with an air of peculiar approbation, and indeed " he was the first man who for a month past talked " to me with smiles. After a few questions, he found " I was fit for every thing in the world. He paused " a while upon the properest means of providing for " me; and slapping his forehead as if he had found it, " assured me, that there was at that time an embassy " talked of from the synod of Pennsylvania to the " Chickasaw Indians, and that he would use his " interest to get me made secretary. I knew in my " own heart that the fellow lied, and yet his promise " gave me pleasure, there was something so magnificent " in the sound. I fairly therefore divided my half " guinea, one half of which went to be added to his " thirty thousand pound, and with the other half I " resolved to go to the next tavern to be there more " happy than he.

" As I was going out with that resolution I was " met at the door by the captain of a ship, with whom " I had formerly some little acquaintance, and he " agreed to be my companion over a bowl of punch. " As I never chose to make a secret of my circum- " stances, he assured me that I was upon the very " point of ruin in listening to the office-keeper's

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" promises; for that he only designed to sell me to " the plantations. But, continued he, I fancy you " might by a much shorter voyage be very easily " put into a genteel way of bread. Take my advice. " My ship sails to-morrow for Amsterdam. What " if you go in her as a passenger? The moment you " land, all you have to do is to teach the Dutchmen " English, and I'll warrant you'll get pupils and " money enough. I suppose you understand English, " added he, by this time, or the deuce is in it. I " confidently assured him of that; but expressed a " doubt whether the Dutch would be willing to learn " English. He affirmed with an oath that they were " fond of it to distraction; and upon that affirmation " I agreed with his proposal, and embarked the next " day to teach the Dutch English in Holland. The " wind was fair, our voyage short, and after having " paid my passage with half my movables, I found " myself as fallen from the skies a stranger in one " of the principal streets of Amsterdam. In this " situation I was unwilling to let any time pass un- " employed in teaching. I addressed myself therefore " to two or three of those I met, whose appearance " seemed most promising; but it was impossible to " make ourselves mutually understood. It was not " till this very moment I recollected, that in order to " teach the Dutchmen English, it was necessary that " they should first teach me Dutch. How I came to " overlook so obvious an objection is to me amazing; " but certain it is I overlooked it.

" This scheme thus blown up, I had some thoughts " of fairly shipping back to England again; but " falling into company with an Irish student who " was returning from Louvain, our conversation turn- " ing upon topics of literature, (for by the way it " may be observed that I always forgot the mean- " ness of my circumstances when I could converse " upon such subjects,) from him I learned that there

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" were not two men in his whole university who un-
" derstood Greek. This amazed me. I instantly re-
" solved to travel to Louvain, and there live by teach-
" ing Greek; and in this design I was heartened by
" my brother student, who threw out some hints that
" a fortune might be got by it.

" I set boldly forward the next morning. Every
" day lessened the burthen of my movables, like
" Æsop and his basket of bread; for I paid them for
" my lodgings to the Dutch as I travelled on. When
" I came to Louvain, I was resolved not to go sneak-
" ing to the lower professors, but openly tendered
" my talents to the principal himself. I went, had
" admittance, and offered him my service as a master
" of the Greek language, which I had been told was
" a desideratum in his university. The principal
" seemed at first to doubt of my abilities; but of these
" I offered to convince him, by turning a part of
" any Greek author he should fix upon into Latin.
" Finding me perfectly earnest in my proposal, he
" addressed me thus: You see me, young man,
" continued he; I never learned Greek, and I don't
" find that I have ever missed it. I have had a doc-
" tor's cap and gown without Greek; I have ten
" thousand florins a year without Greek; I eat
" heartily without Greek, and in short, continued he,
" as I don't know Greek, I do not believe there is any
" good in it.

" I was now too far from home to think of return-
" ing; so I resolved to go forward. I had some
" knowledge of music, with a tolerable voice, and
" now turned what was my amusement into a present
" means of subsistence. I passed among the harm-
" less peasants of Flanders, and among such of the
" French as were poor enough to be very merry; for
" I ever found them sprightly in proportion to their
" wants. Whenever I approached a peasant's house
" towards night-fall, I played one of my most merry

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" tunes, and that procured me not only a lodging " but subsistence for the next day. I once or twice " attempted to play for people of fashion; but they " always thought my performance odious, and never " rewarded me even with a trifle. This was to me " the more extraordinary, as whenever I used in bet- " ter days to play for company, when playing was " my amusement, my music never failed to throw them " into raptures, and the ladies especially; but as it " was now my only means it was received with con- " tempt; a proof how ready the world is to underrate " those talents by which a man is supported.

" In this manner I proceeded to Paris, with no de- " sign but just to look about me, and then to go for- " ward. The people of Paris are much fonder of " strangers that have money than of those that have " wit. As I could not boast much of either, I was " no great favourite. After walking about the town " four or five days, and seeing the outsides of the " best houses, I was preparing to leave this retreat of " venal hospitality, when passing through one of the " principal streets, whom should I meet but our " cousin to whom you first recommended me. This " meeting was very agreeable to me, and I believe " not displeasing to him. He inquired into the " nature of my journey to Paris, and informed me of " his own business there, which was to collect pic- " tures, medals, intaglios, and antiques of all kinds, " for a gentleman in London, who had just stepped " into taste and a large fortune. I was the more sur- " prised at seeing our cousin pitched upon for this " office, as he himself had often assured me he knew " nothing of the matter. Upon asking how he had " been taught the art of a cognoscento so very sud- " denly, he assured me that nothing was more easy. " The whole secret consisted in a strict adherence " to two rules: the one, always to observe the picture " might have been better if the painter had taken

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" more pains; and the other, to praise the works of " Pietro Perugino. But, says he, as I once taught " you how to be an author in London, I 'll now un- " dertake to instruct you in the art of picture-buying " at Paris.

" With this proposal I very readily closed, as it " was living, and now all my ambition was to live. " I went therefore to his lodgings, improved my " dress by his assistance, and after some time accom- " panied him to auctions of pictures, where the Eng- " lish gentry were expected to be purchasers. I was " not a little surprised at his intimacy with people of " the best fashion, who referred themselves to his " judgment upon every picture or medal, as to an " unerring standard of taste. He made very good " use of my assistance upon these occasions; for " when asked his opinion, he would gravely take me " aside and ask mine, shrug, look wise, return, and " assure the company that he could give no opinion " upon an affair of so much importance. Yet there " was sometimes an occasion for a more supported " assurance. I remember to have seen him, after " giving his opinion that the colouring of a picture " was not mellow enough, very deliberately take a " brush with brown varnish, that was accidentally " lying by, and rub it over the piece with great com- " posure before all the company, and then ask if he " had not improved the tints.

" When he had finished his commission in Paris, " he left me strongly recommended to several men " of distinction as a person very proper for a tra- " velling tutor; and after some time I was employed " in that capacity by a gentleman who brought his " ward to Paris, in order to set him forward on his " tour through Europe. I was to be the young gen- " tleman's governor, but with a proviso that he " should always be permitted to govern himself. My " pupil in fact understood the art of guiding in monev

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" concerns much better than I. He was heir to a " fortune of about two hundred thousand pounds, " left him by an uncle in the West Indies; and his " guardians, to qualify him for the management of it, " had bound him apprentice to an attorney. Thus " avarice was his prevailing passion: all his questions " on the road were how money might be saved; " which was the least expensive course of travel; whe- " ther any thing could be bought that would turn to " account when disposed of again in London. Such " curiosities on the way as could be seen for nothing " he was ready enough to look at; but if the sight of " them was to be paid for, he usually asserted that " he had been told they were not worth seeing. He " never paid a bill that he would not observe how " amazingly expensive travelling was, and all this " though he was not yet twenty-one. When arrived " at Leghorn, as we took a walk to look at the port " and shipping, he inquired the expense of the passage " by sea home to England. This, he was informed, " was but a trifle compared to his returning by land; " he was therefore unable to withstand the tempta- " tion; so paying me the small part of my salary that " was due, he took leave, and embarked with only " one attendant for London.

" I now therefore was left once more upon the " world at large; but then it was a thing I was used " to. However, my skill in music could avail me no- " thing in a country where every peasant was a better " musician than I; but by this time I had acquired " another talent, which answered my purpose as well, " and this was a skill in disputation. In all the foreign " universities and convents there are upon certain days " philosophical theses maintained against every ad- " ventitious disputant; for which, if the champion " opposes with any dexterity, he can claim a gratuity " in money, a dinner, and a bed for one night. In " this manner therefore I fought my way towards

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" England, walked along from city to city, examined " mankind more nearly, and, if I may so express it, " saw both sides of the picture. My remarks how- " ever are but few: I found that monarchy was the " best government for the poor to live in, and com- " monwealths for the rich. I found that riches in " general were in every country another name for " freedom; and that no man is so fond of liberty " himself as not to be desirous of subjecting the will " of some individuals in society to his own.

" Upon my arrival in England I resolved to pay " my respects first to you, and then to enlist as a " volunteer in the first expedition that was going " forward; but on my journey down my resolutions " were changed, by meeting an old acquaintance " who I found belonged to a company of comedians " that were going to make a summer campaign in " the country. The company seemed not much to " disapprove of me for an associate. They all, how- " ever, apprised me of the importance of the task at " which I aimed; that the public was a many-headed " monster, and that only such as had very good heads " could please it: that acting was not to be learned " in a day; and that without some traditional shrugs " which had been on the stage, and only on the " stage, these hundred years, I could never pretend to " please. The next difficulty was in fitting me with " parts, as almost every character was in keeping. I " was driven for some time from one character to an- " other, till at last Horatio was fixed upon, which " the presence of the present company has happily " hindered me from acting."

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CHAP. XXI.

The short continuance of friendship amongst the vicious, which is coeval only with mutual satisfaction.

My son's account was too long to be delivered at once; the first part of it was begun that night, and he was concluding the rest after dinner the next day, when the appearance of Mr. Thornhill's equipage at the door seemed to make a pause in the general satisfaction. The butler, who was now become my friend in the family, informed me with a whisper that the 'Squire had already made some overtures to Miss Wilmot, and that her aunt and uncle seemed highly to approve the match. Upon Mr. Thornhill's entering, he seemed at seeing my son and me to start back; but I readily imputed that to surprise and not displeasure. However, upon our advancing to salute him, he returned our greeting with the most apparent candour; and after a short time his presence served only to increase the general good humour.

After tea he called me aside to inquire after my daughter; but upon my informing him that my inquiry was unsuccessful, he seemed greatly surprised; adding, that he had been since frequently at my house in order to comfort the rest of my family, whom he left perfectly well. He then asked if I had communicated her misfortune to Miss Wilmot or my son; and upon my replying that I had not told them as yet, he greatly approved my prudence and precaution, desiring me by all means to keep it a secret: "For at best," cried he, "it is but divulging "one's own infamy; and perhaps Miss Livy may not "be so guilty as we all imagine." We were here interrupted by a servant, who came to ask the 'Squire in,

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to stand up at country-dances; so that he left me quite pleased with the interest he seemed to take in my concerns. His addresses, however, to Miss Wilmot were too obvious to be mistaken: and yet she seemed not perfectly pleased, but bore them rather in compliance to the will of her aunt than from real inclination. I had even the satisfaction to see her lavish some kind looks upon my unfortunate son, which the other could neither extort by his fortune nor assiduity. Mr. Thornhill's seeming composure however not a little surprised me: we had now continued here a week at the pressing instances of Mr. Arnold; but each day, the more tenderness Miss Wilmot shewed my son, Mr. Thornhill's friendship seemed proportionably to increase for him.

He had formerly made us the most kind assurances of using his interest to serve the family; but now his generosity was not confined to promises alone: the morning I designed for my departure, Mr. Thornhill came to me with looks of real pleasure to inform me of a piece of service he had done for his friend George. This was nothing less than his having procured him an ensign's commission in one of the regiments that was going to the West Indies, for which he had promised but one hundred pounds, his interest having been sufficient to get an abatement of the other two. "As for this trifling piece of service," continued the young gentleman, "I desire no other reward but "the pleasure of having served my friend; and as for "the hundred pounds to be paid, if you are unable "to raise it yourselves, I will advance it, and you "shall repay me at your leisure." This was a favour we wanted words to express our sense of: I readily therefore gave my bond for the money, and testified as much gratitude as if I never intended to pay.

George was to depart for town the next day to secure his commission, in pursuance of his generous patron's directions, who judged it highly expedient

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to use dispatch, lest in the mean time another should step in with more advantageous proposals. The next morning therefore our young soldier was early prepared for his departure, and seemed the only person among us that was not affected by it. Neither the fatigues and dangers he was going to encounter, nor the friends and mistress (for Miss Wilmot actually loved him) he was leaving behind, any way damped his spirits. After he had taken leave of the rest of the company, I gave him all I had, my blessing. "And now, my boy," cried I, "thou art going to "fight for thy country, remember how thy brave "grandfather fought for his sacred King, when loyalty "among Britons was a virtue. Go, my boy, and "imitate him in all but his misfortunes, if it was a "misfortune to die with Lord Falkland. Go, my "boy; and if you fall, though distant, exposed, and "unwept by those that love you, the most precious "tears are those with which heaven bedews the un-"buried head of a soldier."

The next morning I took leave of the good family that had been kind enough to entertain me so long, not without several expressions of gratitude to Mr. Thornhill for his late bounty. I left them in the enjoyment of all that happiness which affluence and good breeding procure, and returned towards home, despairing of ever finding my daughter more, but sending a sigh to heaven to spare and to forgive her. I was now come within about twenty miles of home, having hired a horse to carry me, as I was yet but weak, and comforted myself with the hopes of soon seeing all I held dearest upon earth. But the night coming on, I put up at a little public-house by the road side, and asked for the landlord's company over a pint of wine. We sate beside his kitchen fire, which was the best room in the house, and chatted on politics and the news of the country. We happened, among other topics, to talk of young

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'Squire Thornhill, who, the host assured me, was hated as much as his uncle Sir William, who sometimes came down to the country, was loved. He went on to observe, that he made it his whole study to betray the daughters of such as received him to their houses, and after a fortnight or three weeks possession, turned them out unrewarded and abandoned to the world. As we continued our discourse in this manner, his wife, who had been out to get change, returned, and perceiving that her husband was enjoying a pleasure in which she was not a sharer, she asked him in an angry tone, what he did there, to which he only replied in an ironical way, by drinking her health. "Mr. Symmonds," cried she, "you use "me very ill, and I'll bear it no longer. Here three "parts of the business is left for me to do, and the "fourth left unfinished; while you do nothing but "soak with the guests all day long, whereas if a "spoonful of liquor were to cure me of a fever I never "touch a drop." I now found what she would be at, and immediately poured her out a glass, which she received with a courtesy, and drinking towards my good health, "Sir," resumed she, "it is not so much "for the value of the liquor I am angry, but one "cannot help it when the house is going out of "the windows. If the customers or guests are to be "dunned, all the burthen lies upon my back, he'd as "lief eat that glass as budge after them himself. "There now above stairs we have a young woman "who has come to take up her lodgings here, and I "don't believe she has got any money by her over-"civility. I am certain she is very slow of payment, "and I wish she were put in mind of it."—"What "signifies minding her?" cried the host, "if she be "slow she is sure."—"I don't know that," replied the wife; "but I know that I am sure she has "been here a fortnight and we have not yet seen the

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" cross of her money."—" I suppose, my dear," cried he, " we shall have it all in a lump."—" In a lump!" cried the other, " I hope we may get it any way; " and that I am resolved we will this very night, or " out she tramps bag and baggage."—" Consider, my " dear," cried the husband, " she is a gentlewoman, " and deserves more respect."——" As for the matter " of that," returned the hostess, " gentle or simple, " out she shall pack with a sassarara. Gentry may " be good things where they take; but for my part " I never saw much good of them at the sign of the " Harrow."—Thus saying, she ran up a narrow flight of stairs that went from the kitchen to a room overhead; and I soon perceived by the loudness of her voice, and the bitterness of her reproaches, that no money was to be had from her lodger. I could hear her remonstrances very distinctly: " Out, I say, pack " out this moment, tramp, thou infamous strumpet! " or I 'll give thee a mark thou won't be the better for " this three months. What! you trumpery, to come " and take up an honest house without cross or coin " to bless yourself with! come along, I say."—— " O dear madam," cried the stranger, " pity me, " pity a poor abandoned creature for one night, and " death will soon do the rest."—I instantly knew the voice of my poor ruined child Olivia. I flew to her rescue, while the woman was dragging her along by the hair, and I caught the dear forlorn wretch in my arms.——" Welcome, any way welcome, my dearest " lost one, my treasure, to your poor old father's " bosom! Though the vicious forsake thee, there " is yet one in the world that will never forsake " thee; though thou hadst ten thousand crimes to " answer for, he will forget them all."——" O my " own dear,"—for minutes she could no more—" my " own dearest good papa! Could angels be kinder! " How do I deserve so much! The villain, I hate him,

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"and myself, to be a reproach to such goodness. "You can't forgive me. I know you cannot."—— "Yes, my child, from my heart I do forgive thee! "Only repent, and we both shall yet be happy. "We shall see many pleasant days yet, my Olivia!" ——"Ah! never, Sir, never. The rest of my "wretched life must be infamy abroad and shame "at home. But, alas! papa, you look much paler "than you used to do. Could such a thing as "I am give you so much uneasiness? Surely you "have too much wisdom to take the miseries of "my guilt upon yourself."——"Our wisdom, young "woman," replied I.——"Ah, why so cold a name, "papa?" cried she. "This is the first time you "ever called me by so cold a name."——"I ask "pardon, my darling," returned I; "but I was going "to observe, that wisdom makes but a slow defence "against trouble, though at last a sure one."

The landlady now returned to know if we did not choose a more genteel apartment; to which assenting, we were shewn a room where we could converse more freely. After we had talked ourselves into some degree of tranquillity, I could not avoid desiring some account of the gradations that led to her present wretched situation. "That villain, Sir," said she, "from the first day of our meeting made me honour- "able though private proposals."

"Villain, indeed," cried I; "and yet it in some "measure surprises me, how a person of Mr. Bur- "chell's good sense and seeming honour could be "guilty of such deliberate baseness, and thus step "into a family to undo it."

"My dear papa," returned my daughter, "you "labour under a strange mistake; Mr. Burchell never "attempted to deceive me: instead of that he took "every opportunity of privately admonishing me "against the artifices of Mr. Thornhill, who I now "find was even worse than he represented him."—

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"Mr. Thornhill," interrupted I, "can it be?" "Yes," "Sir," returned she, "it was Mr. Thornhill who "seduced me, who employed the two ladies as he "called them, but who in fact were abandoned "women of the town without breeding or pity, to "decoy us up to London. Their artifices, you may "remember, would have certainly succeeded but for "Mr. Burchell's letter, who directed those reproaches "at them which we all applied to ourselves. How "he came to have so much influence as to defeat "their intentions still remains a secret to me; but "I am convinced he was ever our warmest sincerest "friend."

"You amaze me, my dear," cried I; "but now I "find my first suspicions of Mr. Thornhill's baseness "were too well grounded: but he can triumph in "security, for he is rich and we are poor. But tell "me, my child, sure it was no small temptation that "could thus obliterate all the impressions of such an "education, and so virtuous a disposition, as thine?"

"Indeed, Sir," replied she, "he owes all his tri-"umph to the desire I had of making him, and not "myself, happy. I knew that the ceremony of our "marriage, which was privately performed by a "popish priest, was no way binding, and that I had "nothing to trust to but his honour." "What!" interrupted I, "and were you indeed married by a "priest, and in orders?"——"Indeed, Sir, we were," replied she, "though we were both sworn to conceal "his name."——"Why then, my child, come to my "arms again, and now you are a thousand times more "welcome than before; for you are now his wife to "all intents and purposes; nor can all the laws of "man, though written upon tables of adamant, lessen "the force of that sacred connexion."

"Alas! papa," replied she, "you are but little ac-"quainted with his villainies: he has been married "already by the same priest to six or eight wives

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" more, whom, like me, he has deceived and aban-
" doned."

" Has he so?" cried I, " then we must hang the
" priest, and you shall inform against him to-morrow."
——" But, Sir," returned she, " will that be right,
" when I am sworn to secrecy?"——" My dear," I
replied, " if you have made such a promise, I can-
" not, nor will I tempt you to break it. Even though
" it may benefit the public, you must not inform
" against him. In all human institutions a smaller
" evil is allowed to procure a greater good: as in
" politics, a province may be given away to secure a
" kingdom; in medicine, a limb may be lopped off
" to preserve the body. But in religion the law is
" written, and inflexible, *never* to do evil. And
" this law, my child, is right: for otherwise, if we
" commit a smaller evil to procure a greater good,
" certain guilt would be thus incurred, in expectation
" of contingent advantage. And though the advan-
" tage should certainly follow, yet the interval between
" commission and advantage, which is allowed to be
" guilty, may be that in which we are called away to
" answer for the things we have done, and the volume
" of human actions is closed for ever. But I interrupt
" you, my dear; go on."

" The very next morning," continued she, " I found
" what little expectations I was to have from his sin-
" cerity. That very morning he introduced me to
" two unhappy women more, whom like me he had
" deceived, but who lived in contented prostitution.
" I loved him too tenderly to bear such rivals in his
" affections, and strove to forget my infamy in a tumult
" of pleasures. With this view I danced, dressed, and
" talked; but still was unhappy. The gentlemen who
" visited there told me every moment of the power of
" my charms; and this only contributed to increase my
" melancholy, as I had thrown all their power quite
" away. Thus each day I grew more pensive, and he

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"more insolent, till at last the monster had the "assurance to offer me to a young Baronet of his "acquaintance. Need I describe, Sir, how his ingra- "titude stung me? My answer to this proposal was "almost madness. I desired to part. As I was going "he offered me a purse; but I flung it at him with "indignation, and burst from him in a rage, that for "a while kept me insensible of the miseries of my "situation. But I soon looked round me, and saw "myself a vile, abject, guilty thing, without one "friend in the world to apply to. Just in that in- "terval a stage coach happening to pass by, I took "a place, it being my only aim to be driven at a "distance from a wretch I despised and detested. I "was set down here, where, since my arrival, my own "anxiety and this woman's unkindness have been my "only companions. The hours of pleasure that I "have passed with my mamma and sister now grow "painful to me. Their sorrows are much; but mine "are greater than theirs, for mine are mixed with "guilt and infamy."

"Have patience, my child," cried I, "and I hope "things will yet be better. Take some repose to- "night, and to-morrow I'll carry you home to your "mother and the rest of the family, from whom you "will receive a kind reception. Poor woman, this has "gone to her heart: but she loves you still, Olivia, "and will forget it."

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CHAP. XXII.

Offences are easily pardoned where there is love at bottom.

THE next morning I took my daughter behind me, and set out on my return home. As we travelled along, I strove by every persuasion to calm her sorrows and fears, and to arm her with resolution to bear the presence of her offended mother. I took every opportunity from the prospect of a fine country, through which we passed, to observe how much kinder Heaven was to us than we to each other, and that the misfortunes of nature's making were very few. I assured her, that she should never perceive any change in my affections, and that during my life, which yet might be long, she might depend upon a guardian and an instructor. I armed her against the censures of the world, shewed her that books were sweet unreproaching companions to the miserable, and that if they could not bring us to enjoy life, they would at least teach us to endure it.

The hired horse that we rode was to be put up that night at an inn by the way, within about five miles from my house; and as I was willing to prepare my family for my daughter's reception, I determined to leave her that night at the inn, and to return for her, accompanied by my daughter Sophia, early the next morning. It was night before we reached our appointed stage: however, after seeing her provided with a decent apartment, and having ordered the hostess to prepare proper refreshments, I kissed her, and proceeded towards home. And now my heart caught new sensations of pleasure the nearer I approached that peaceful mansion. As a

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bird that had been frighted from its nest, my affections outwent my haste, and hovered round my little fire-side with all the rapture of expectation. I called up the many fond things I had to say, and anticipated the welcome I was to receive. I already felt my wife's tender embrace, and smiled at the joy of my little ones. As I walked but slowly, the night waned apace. The labourers of the day were all retired to rest; the lights were out in every cottage; no sounds were heard but of the shrilling cock, and the deep-mouthed watch-dog at hollow distance. I approached my little abode of pleasure, and before I was within a furlong of the place, our honest mastiff came running to welcome me.

It was now near midnight that I came to knock at my door: all was still and silent: my heart dilated with unutterable happiness, when, to my amazement, I saw the house bursting out in a blaze of fire, and every aperture red with conflagration! I gave a loud convulsive outcry, and fell upon the pavement insensible. This alarmed my son, who had till this been asleep; and he perceiving the flames instantly waked my wife and daughter, and all running out naked and wild with apprehension, recalled me to life with their anguish. But it was only to objects of new terror; for the flames had by this time caught the roof of our dwelling, part after part continuing to fall in, while the family stood with silent agony looking on as if they enjoyed the blaze. I gazed upon them and upon it by turns, and then looked round me for my two little ones; but they were not to be seen. O misery! "Where," cried I, "where are "my little ones?"——"They are burnt to death in "the flames," says my wife calmly, "and I will die "with them."——That moment I heard the cry of the babes within, who were just awaked by the fire, and nothing could have stopped me. "Where, where "are my children?" cried I, rushing through the

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flames, and bursting the door of the chamber in which they were confined, "Where are my little ones?" ——"Here, dear papa, here we are," cried they together, while the flames were just catching the bed where they lay. I caught them both in my arms, and snatching them through the fire as fast as possible, just as I was got out, the roof sunk in. "Now," cried I, holding up my children, "now "let the flames burn on, and all my possessions "perish. Here they are, I have saved my treasure. "Here, my dearest, here are our treasures, and we "shall yet be happy." We kissed our little darlings a thousand times; they clasped us round the neck, and seemed to share our transports, while their mother laughed and wept by turns.

I now stood a calm spectator of the flames, and after some time began to perceive that my arm to the shoulder was scorched in a terrible manner. It was therefore out of my power to give my son any assistance, either in attempting to save our goods, or preventing the flames spreading to our corn. By this time the neighbours were alarmed, and came running to our assistance; but all they could do was to stand, like us, spectators of the calamity. My goods, among which were the notes I had reserved for my daughters' fortunes, were entirely consumed, except a box with some papers that stood in the kitchen, and two or three things more of little consequence, which my son brought away in the beginning. The neighbours contributed, however, what they could to lighten our distress. They brought us clothes, and furnished one of our outhouses with kitchen utensils; so that by day-light we had another, though a wretched, dwelling to retire to. My honest next neighbour and his children were not the least assiduous in providing us with every thing necessary, and offering whatever consolation untutored benevolence could suggest.

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When the fears of my family had subsided, curiosity to know the cause of my long stay began to take place: having therefore informed them of every particular, I proceeded to prepare them for the reception of our lost one; and, though we had nothing but wretchedness now to impart, I was willing to procure her a welcome to what we had. This task would have been more difficult but for our recent calamity, which had humbled my wife's pride, and blunted it by more poignant afflictions. Being unable to go for my poor child myself, as my arm grew very painful, I sent my son and daughter, who soon returned, supporting the wretched delinquent, who had not the courage to look up at her mother, whom no instructions of mine could persuade to a perfect reconciliation; for women have a much stronger sense of female error than men. "Ah, "madam," cried her mother, "this is but a poor "place you are come to after so much finery. My "daughter Sophy and I can afford but little enter- "tainment to persons who have kept company only "with people of distinction. Yes, Miss Livy, your "poor father and I have suffered very much of late; "but I hope Heaven will forgive you."——During this reception, the unhappy victim stood pale and trembling, unable to weep or to reply; but I could not continue a silent spectator of her distress; wherefore assuming a degree of severity in my voice and manner, which was ever followed with instant submission, "I intreat, woman, that my words may "be now marked once for all: I have here brought "you back a poor deluded wanderer; her return to "duty demands the revival of our tenderness. The "real hardships of life are now coming fast upon "us, let us not, therefore, increase them by dis- "sension among each other. If we live harmo- "niously together, we may yet be contented, as "there are enough of us to shut out the censuring

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" world, and keep each other in countenance. The " kindness of heaven is promised to the penitent, " and let ours be directed by the example. Heaven, " we are assured, is much more pleased to view a " repentant sinner, than ninety-nine persons who " have supported a course of undeviating rectitude. " And this is right; for that single effort by which " we stop short in the down-hill path to perdition, is " itself a greater exertion of virtue than an hundred " acts of justice."

CHAP. XXIII.

None but the guilty can be long and completely miserable.

SOME assiduity was now required to make our present abode as convenient as possible, and we were soon again qualified to enjoy our former serenity. Being disabled myself from assisting my son in our usual occupations, I read to my family from the few books that were saved, and particularly from such as, by amusing the imagination, contributed to ease the heart. Our good neighbours too came every day with the kindest condolence, and fixed a time in which they were all to assist at repairing my former dwelling. Honest farmer Williams was not last among these visitors, but heartily offered his friendship. He would even have renewed his addresses to my daughter; but she rejected him in such a manner as totally repressed his future solicitations. —Her grief seemed formed for continuing, and she

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was the only person of our little society that a week did not restore to cheerfulness. She now lost that unblushing innocence which once taught her to respect herself, and to seek pleasure by pleasing.—Anxiety now had taken strong possession of her mind, her beauty began to be impaired with her constitution, and neglect still more contributed to diminish it. Every tender epithet bestowed on her sister brought a pang to her heart and a tear to her eye; and as one vice, though cured, ever plants others where it has been, so her former guilt, though driven out by repentance, left jealousy and envy behind. I strove a thousand ways to lessen her care, and even forgot my own pain in a concern for her's, collecting such amusing passages of history as a strong memory and some reading could suggest.—"Our happiness, my dear," I would say, "is in the "power of one who can bring it about a thousand "unforeseen ways that mock our foresight. If ex-"ample be necessary to prove this, I'll give you a "story, my child, told us by a grave, though some-"times a romancing, historian.

"Matilda was married very young to a Neapo-"litan nobleman of the first quality, and found her-"self a widow and a mother at the age of fifteen. "As she stood one day caressing her infant son in "the open window of an apartment which hung "over the river Volturna, the child with a sudden "spring leaped from her arms into the flood be-"low, and disappeared in a moment. The mother, "struck with instant surprise, and making an effort "to save him, plunged in after; but far from being "able to assist the infant, she herself with great dif-"ficulty escaped to the opposite shore, just when "some French soldiers were plundering the country "on that side, who immediately made her their "prisoner.

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"As the war was then carried on between the "French and Italians with the utmost inhumanity, "they were going at once to perpetrate those two "extremes suggested by appetite and cruelty. This "base resolution however was opposed by a young "officer, who, though their retreat required the "utmost expedition, placed her behind him, and "brought her in safety to his native city. Her "beauty at first caught his eye; her merit soon after, "his heart. They were married; he rose to the "highest posts; they lived long together and were "happy. But the felicity of a soldier can never be "called permanent: after an interval of several years, "the troops which he commanded having met with a "repulse, he was obliged to take shelter in the city "where he had lived with his wife. Here they suf-"fered a siege, and the city at length was taken. "Few histories can produce more various instances of "cruelty than those which the French and Italians "at that time exercised upon each other. It was re-"solved by the victors upon this occasion to put all "the French prisoners to death; but particularly the "husband of the unfortunate Matilda, as he was "principally instrumental in protracting the siege. "Their determinations were in general executed al-"most as soon as resolved upon. The captive soldier "was led forth, and the executioner with his sword "stood ready, while the spectators in gloomy silence "awaited the fatal blow, which was only suspended "till the general, who presided as judge, should give "the signal. It was in this interval of anguish and "expectation, that Matilda came to take her last "farewell of her husband and deliverer, deploring "her wretched situation, and the cruelty of fate, "that had saved her from perishing by a premature "death in the river Volturna, to be the spectator of "still greater calamities. The general, who was a "young man, was struck with surprise at her beauty,

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"and pity at her distress; but with still stronger "emotions when he heard her mention her former "dangers. He was her son, the infant for whom she "had encountered so much danger. He acknow- "ledged her at once as his mother, and fell at her "feet. The rest may be easily supposed: the captive "was set free, and all the happiness that love, friend- "ship, and duty could confer on each, was united."

In this manner I would attempt to amuse my daughter; but she listened with divided attention; for her own misfortunes engrossed all the pity she once had for those of another, and nothing gave her ease. In company she dreaded contempt; and in solitude she only found anxiety. Such was the colour of her wretchedness, when we received certain information that Mr. Thornhill was going to be married to Miss Wilmot, for whom I always suspected he had a real passion, though he took every opportunity before me to express his contempt both of her person and fortune. This news only served to increase poor Olivia's affliction; such a flagrant breach of fidelity was more than her courage could support. I was resolved, however, to get more certain information, and to defeat if possible the completion of his designs, by sending my son to old Mr. Wilmot's, with instructions to know the truth of the report, and to deliver Miss Wilmot a letter intimating Mr. Thornhill's conduct in my family. My son went in pursuance of my directions, and in three days returned, assuring us of the truth of the account; but that he had found it impossible to deliver the letter, which he was therefore obliged to leave, as Mr. Thornhill and Miss Wilmot were visiting round the country. They were to be married, he said, in a few days, having appeared together at church the Sunday before he was there in great splendour, the bride attended by six young ladies, and he by as many gentlemen. Their approaching nuptials filled the whole country with rejoicing, and they

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usually rode out together in the grandest equipage that had been seen in the country for many years. All the friends of both families, he said, were there, particularly the 'Squire's uncle, Sir William Thornhill, who bore so good a character. He added, that nothing but mirth and feasting were going forward; that all the country praised the young bride's beauty, and the bridegroom's fine person, and that they were immensely fond of each other; concluding, that he could not help thinking Mr. Thornhill one of the most happy men in the world.

"Why, let him if he can," returned I: "but, my "son, observe this bed of straw and unsheltering roof; "those mouldering walls and humid floor; my wretch- "ed body thus disabled by fire, and my children weep- "ing round me for bread: you have come home, my "child, to all this; yet here, even here, you see a "man that would not for a thousand worlds exchange "situations. Oh, my children, if you could but learn "to commune with your own hearts, and know what "noble company you can make them, you would lit- "tle regard the elegance and splendours of the worth- "less. Almost all men have been taught to call life "a passage, and themselves the travellers. The "similitude still may be improved when we observe "that the good are joyful and serene, like travel- "lers that are going towards home; the wicked but "by intervals happy, like travellers that are going "into exile."

My compassion for my poor daughter, overpowered by this new disaster, interrupted what I had farther to observe. I bade her mother support her, and after a short time she recovered. She appeared from that time more calm, and I imagined had gained a new degree of resolution: but appearances deceived me; for her tranquillity was the languor of overwrought resentment. A supply of provisions charitably sent

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us by my kind parishioners, seemed to diffuse new cheerfulness amongst the rest of the family; nor was I displeased at seeing them once more sprightly and at ease. It would have been unjust to damp their satisfactions, merely to condole with resolute melancholy, or to burthen them with a sadness they did not feel. Thus once more the tale went round, and the song was demanded, and cheerfulness condescended to hover round our little habitation.

CHAP. XXIV.

Fresh calamities.

THE next morning the sun arose with peculiar warmth for the season; so that we agreed to breakfast together on the honeysuckle bank: where while we sate, my youngest daughter at my request joined her voice to the concert on the trees about us. It was in this place my poor Olivia first met her seducer, and every object served to recal her sadness. But that melancholy which is excited by objects of pleasure, or inspired by sounds of harmony, soothes the heart instead of corroding it. Her mother too upon this occasion felt a pleasing distress, and wept, and loved her daughter as before. "Do, my pretty Olivia," cried she, "let us have that little melancholy air your papa "was so fond of; your sister Sophy has already "obliged us. Do, child, it will please your old "father." She complied in a manner so exquisitely pathetic as moved me.

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WHEN lovely woman stoops to folly,
And finds too late that men betray,
What charm can soothe her melancholy,
What art can wash her guilt away?

The only art her guilt to cover,
To hide her shame from every eye,
To give repentance to her lover,
And wring his bosom, is—to die.

As she was concluding the last stanza, to which an interruption in her voice from sorrow gave peculiar softness, the appearance of Mr. Thornhill's equipage at a distance alarmed us all, but particularly increased the uneasiness of my eldest daughter, who, desirous of shunning her betrayer, returned to the house with her sister. In a few minutes he was alighted from his chariot; and making up to the place where I was still sitting, inquired after my health with his usual air of familiarity. "Sir," replied I, "your present "assurance only serves to aggravate the baseness of "your character; and there was a time when I would "have chastised your insolence for presuming thus "to appear before me. But now you are safe; for "age has cooled my passions, and my calling restrains "them."

"I vow, my dear Sir," returned he, "I am amazed "at all this; nor can I understand what it means! "I hope you don't think your daughter's late excur- "sion with me had any thing criminal in it."

"Go," cried I, "thou art a wretch, a poor pitiful "wretch, and every way a liar: but your meanness "secures you from my anger! Yet, Sir, I am de- "scended from a family that would not have borne "this! And so, thou vile thing, to gratify a mo- "mentary passion, thou hast made one poor creature

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" wretched for life, and polluted a family that had " nothing but honour for their portion."

" If she or you," returned he, " are resolved to be " miserable, I cannot help it. But you may still be " happy: and whatever opinion you may have formed " of me, you shall ever find me ready to contribute to " it. We can marry her to another in a short time, " and what is more, she may keep her lover beside; " for I protest, I shall ever continue to have a true " regard for her."

I found all my passions alarmed at this new degrading proposal; for though the mind may often be calm under great injuries, little villainy can at any time get within the soul and sting it into rage.—— " Avoid my sight, thou reptile," cried I, " nor con- " tinue to insult me with thy presence. Were my " brave son at home he would not suffer this; but I " am old and disabled, and every way undone."

" I find," cried he, " you are bent upon obliging " me to talk in an harsher manner than I intended. " But as I have shewn you what may be hoped from " my friendship, it may not be improper to represent " what may be the consequences of my resentment. " My attorney, to whom your late bond has been " transferred, threatens hard, nor do I know how to " prevent the course of justice, except by paying the " money myself, which, as I have been at some ex- " penses lately, previous to my intended marriage, is " not so easy to be done. And then my steward talks " of driving for the rent: it is certain he knows his " duty; for I never trouble myself with affairs of " that nature. Yet still I could wish to serve you, " and even to have you and your daughter present at " my marriage, which is shortly to be solemnized " with Miss Wilmot; it is even the request of my " charming Arabella herself, whom I hope you will " not refuse."

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"Mr. Thornhill," replied I, "hear me once for "all: as to your marriage with any but my daughter, "that I never will consent to; and though your "friendship could raise me to a throne, or your re- "sentment sink me to the grave, yet would I despise "both. Thou hast once wofully, irreparably deceived "me. I reposed my heart upon thine honour, and "have found its baseness. Never more therefore "expect friendship from me. Go, and possess what "fortune has given thee, beauty, riches, health, and "pleasure. Go, and leave me to want, infamy, "disease, and sorrow. Yet, humbled as I am, shall "my heart still vindicate its dignity; and though "thou hast my forgiveness, thou shalt ever have my "contempt."

"If so," returned he, "depend upon it you shall "feel the effects of this insolence, and we shall shortly "see which is the fittest object of scorn, you or me." —Upon which he departed abruptly.

My wife and son, who were present at this interview, seemed terrified with the apprehension. My daughters also, finding that he was gone, came out to be informed of the result of our conference, which when known alarmed them not less than the rest. But as to myself, I disregarded the utmost stretch of his malevolence: he had already struck the blow, and now I stood prepared to repel every new effort; like one of those instruments used in the art of war, which however thrown still presents a point to receive the enemy.

We soon, however, found that he had not threatened in vain; for the very next morning his steward came to demand my annual rent, which by the train of accidents already related I was unable to pay. The consequence of my incapacity was his driving my cattle that evening, and their being appraised and sold the next day for less than half their value.

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My wife and children now therefore intreated me to comply upon any terms, rather than incur certain destruction. They even begged of me to admit his visits once more, and used all their little eloquence to paint the calamities I was going to endure;—the terrors of a prison in so rigorous a season as the present, with the danger that threatened my health from the late accident that happened by the fire. But I continued inflexible.

"Why, my treasures," cried I, "why will you "thus attempt to persuade me to the thing that is "not right? My duty has taught me to forgive him; "but my conscience will not permit me to approve. "Would you have me applaud to the world what my "heart must internally condemn? Would you have "me tamely sit down and flatter our infamous be-"trayer; and to avoid a prison continually suffer the "more galling bonds of mental confinement? No, "never. If we are to be taken from this abode, only "let us hold to the right, and wherever we are thrown "we can still retire to a charming apartment, when "we can look round our own hearts with intrepidity "and with pleasure!"

In this manner we spent that evening. Early the next morning, as the snow had fallen in great abundance in the night, my son was employed in clearing it away, and opening a passage before the door. He had not been thus engaged long when he came running in, with looks all pale, to tell us, that two strangers, whom he knew to be officers of justice, were making towards the house.

Just as he spoke they came in, and approaching the bed where I lay, after previously informing me of their employment and business, made me their prisoner, bidding me prepare to go with them to the county gaol, which was eleven miles off.

"My friends," said I, "this is severe weather on "which you have come to take me to a prison; and

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" it is particularly unfortunate at this time, as one of " my arms has lately been burnt in a terrible manner, " and it has thrown me into a slight fever, and I want " clothes to cover me, and I am now too weak and " old to walk far in such deep snow: but if it must " be so————"

I then turned to my wife and children, and directed them to get together what few things were left us, and to prepare immediately for leaving this place. I intreated them to be expeditious, and desired my son to assist his eldest sister, who, from a consciousness that she was the cause of all our calamities, was fallen, and had lost anguish in insensibility. I encouraged my wife who, pale and trembling, clasped our affrighted little ones in her arms, that clung to her bosom in silence, dreading to look round at the strangers. In the mean time my youngest daughter prepared for our departure, and as she received several hints to use dispatch, in about an hour we were ready to depart.

CHAP. XXV.

No situation, however wretched it seems, but has some sort of comfort attending it.

We set forward from this peaceful neighbourhood, and walked on slowly. My eldest daughter being enfeebled by a slow fever, which had begun for some days to undermine her constitution, one of the officers, who had an horse, kindly took her behind him; for even these men cannot entirely divest themselves of humanity. My son led one of the little ones by the hand, and my wife the other, while I leaned upon my youngest girl, whose tears fell not for her own but my distresses.

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We were now got from my late dwelling about two miles, when we saw a crowd running and shouting behind us, consisting of about fifty of my poorest parishioners. These with dreadful imprecations soon seized upon the two officers of justice, and swearing they would never see their minister go to gaol while they had a drop of blood to shed in his defence, were going to use them with great severity. The consequence might have been fatal had I not immediately interposed, and with some difficulty rescued the officers from the hands of the enraged multitude. My children, who looked upon my delivery now as certain, appeared transported with joy, and were incapable of containing their raptures. But they were soon undeceived, upon hearing me address the poor deluded people who came as they imagined to do me service.

"What! my friends," cried I, "and is this the "way you love me! Is this the manner you obey "the instructions I have given you from the pulpit! "Thus to fly in the face of justice, and bring down "ruin on yourselves and me! Which is your ring-"leader? Shew me the man that has thus seduced "you. As sure as he lives he shall feel my resent-"ment. Alas! my dear deluded flock, return back "to the duty you owe to God, to your country, and "to me. I shall yet perhaps one day see you in "greater felicity here, and contribute to make your "lives more happy. But let it at least be my com-"fort when I pen my fold for immortality, that not "one here shall be wanting."

They now seemed all repentance, and melting into tears came one after the other to bid me farewell. I shook each tenderly by the hand, and leaving them my blessing, proceeded forward without meeting any farther interruption. Some hours before night we reached the town, or rather village; for it consisted but of a few mean houses, having lost all its former

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opulence, and retaining no marks of its ancient superiority but the gaol.

Upon entering we put up at an inn, where we had such refreshments as could most readily be procured, and I supped with my family with my usual cheerfulness. After seeing them properly accommodated for that night, I next attended the sheriff's officers to the prison; which had formerly been built for the purposes of war, and consisted of one large apartment strongly grated and paved with stone, common to both felons and debtors at certain hours in the four and twenty. Besides this, every prisoner had a separate cell where he was locked in for the night.

I expected upon my entrance to find nothing but lamentations and various sounds of misery; but it was very different. The prisoners seemed all employed in one common design, that of forgetting thought in merriment or clamour. I was apprised of the usual perquisite required upon these occasions, and immediately complied with the demand, though the little money I had was very near being all exhausted. This was immediately sent away for liquor, and the whole prison soon was filled with riot, laughter, and prophaneness.

"How!" cried I to myself, "shall men so very "wicked be cheerful, and shall I be melancholy! I "feel only the same confinement with them, and I "think I have more reason to be happy."

With such reflections I laboured to become cheerful; but cheerfulness was never yet produced by effort, which is itself painful. As I was sitting therefore in a corner of the gaol in a pensive posture, one of my fellow prisoners came up, and sitting by me entered into conversation. It was my constant rule in life never to avoid the conversation of any man who seemed to desire it: for, if good, I might profit by his instruction; if bad, he might be assisted by mine. I found this to be a knowing man of strong

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unlettered sense, but a thorough knowledge of the world, as it is called, or, more properly speaking, of human nature on the wrong side. He asked me if I had taken care to provide myself with a bed, which was a circumstance I had never once attended to.

"That's unfortunate," cried he, "as you are al-
"lowed here nothing but straw, and your apartment
"is very large and cold. However, you seem to be
"something of a gentleman, and, as I have been one
"myself in my time, part of my bed-clothes are
"heartily at your service."

I thanked him, professing my surprise at finding such humanity in a gaol in misfortunes; adding, to let him see that I was a scholar, that "The sage an-
"cient seemed to understand the value of company
"in affliction, when he said, *Ton kosmon aire, ei dos*
"*ton etairon*; and in fact," continued I, "what is
"the world, if it affords only solitude?"

"You talk of the world, Sir," returned my fellow-prisoner; "*the world is in its dotage, and yet the*
"*cosmogony or creation of the world has puzzled*
"*the philosophers of every age. What a medley*
"*of opinions have they not broached upon the*
"*creation of the world. Sanchoniathon, Manetho,*
"*Berosus, and Ocellus Lucanus, have all attempted*
"*it in vain. The latter has these words, Anarchon*
"*ara kai atelutaion to pan, which implies*"——"I
"ask pardon, Sir," cried I, "for interrupting so
"much learning; but I think I have heard all this
"before. Have I not had the pleasure of once see-
"ing you at Welbridge fair, and is not your name
"Ephraim Jenkinson?" At this demand he only sighed. "I suppose you must recollect," resumed I,
"one Doctor Primrose, from whom you bought a
"horse."

He now at once recollected me; for the gloomi-ness of the place, and the approaching night, had prevented his distinguishing my features before.——

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"Yes, Sir," returned Mr. Jenkinson, "I remember "you perfectly well; I bought a horse, but forgot "to pay for him. Your neighbour Flamborough is "the only prosecutor I am any way afraid of at the "next assizes; for he intends to swear positively "against me as a coiner. I am heartily sorry, Sir, "I ever deceived you, or indeed any man; for you "see," continued he, shewing his shackles, "what "my tricks have brought me to."

"Well, Sir," replied I, "your kindness in offer- "ing me assistance when you could expect no re- "turn, shall be repaid with my endeavours to soften, "or totally suppress, Mr. Flamborough's evidence, "and I will send my son to him for that purpose "the first opportunity; nor do I in the least doubt "but he will comply with my request; and as to my "own evidence, you need be under no uneasiness "about that."

"Well, Sir," cried he, "all the return I can make "shall be yours. You shall have more than half "my bed-clothes to-night, and I'll take care to stand "your friend in the prison, where I think I have "some influence."

I thanked him, and could not avoid being surprised at the present youthful change in his aspect; for at the time I had seen him before he appeared at least sixty.—"Sir," answered he, "you are little ac- "quainted with the world; I had at that time false "hair, and have learned the art of counterfeiting every "age from seventeen to seventy. Ah! Sir, had I "but bestowed half the pains in learning a trade "that I have in learning to be a scoundrel, I might "have been a rich man at this day. But, rogue as "I am, still I may be your friend, and that, perhaps, "when you least expect it."

We were now prevented from farther conversation by the arrival of the gaoler's servants, who came to call over the prisoners' names, and lock up for the

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night. A fellow also with a bundle of straw for my bed attended, who led me along a dark narrow passage into a room paved like the common prison, and in one corner of this I spread my bed and the clothes given me by my fellow prisoner; which done, my conductor, who was civil enough, bade me a good night. After my usual meditations, and having praised my heavenly corrector, I laid myself down, and slept with the utmost tranquillity till morning.

CHAP. XXVI.

A reformation in the gaol. To make laws complete they should reward as well as punish.

THE next morning early I was awakened by my family, whom I found in tears at my bed-side. The gloomy strength of every thing about us, it seems, had daunted them. I gently rebuked their sorrow, assuring them I had never slept with greater tranquillity, and next inquired after my eldest daughter, who was not among them. They informed me that yesterday's uneasiness and fatigue had increased her fever, and it was judged proper to leave her behind. My next care was to send my son to procure a room or two to lodge the family in, as near the prison as conveniently could be found. He obeyed; but could only find one apartment, which was hired at a small expense for his mother and sisters, the gaoler with humanity consenting to let him and his two little brothers lie in the prison with me. A bed was therefore prepared for them in a corner of the room,

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which I thought answered very conveniently. I was willing however previously to know, whether my little children chose to lie in a place which seemed to fright them upon entrance.

"Well," cried I, "my good boys, how do you like "your bed? I hope you are not afraid to lie in this "room, dark as it appears."

"No, papa," says Dick, "I am not afraid to lie "anywhere where you are."

"And I," says Bill, who was yet but four years old, "love every place best that my papa is in."

After this I allotted to each of the family what they were to do. My daughter was particularly directed to watch her declining sister's health; my wife was to attend me; my little boys were to read to me: "And as for you, my son," continued I, "it is by "the labour of your hands we must all hope to be "supported. Your wages as a day-labourer will be "fully sufficient with proper frugality to maintain us "all, and comfortably too. Thou art now sixteen "years old, and hast strength, and it was given thee, "my son, for very useful purposes; for it must save "from famine your helpless parents and family. Pre-"pare then this evening to look out for work against "to-morrow, and bring home every night what mo-"ney you earn for our support."

Having thus instructed him and settled the rest, I walked down to the common prison, where I could enjoy more air and room. But I was not long there when the execrations, lewdness, and brutality, that invaded me on every side, drove me back to my apartment again. Here I sate for some time pondering upon the strange infatuation of wretches who, finding all mankind in open arms against them, were labouring to make themselves a future and a tremendous enemy.

Their insensibility excited my highest compassion, and blotted my own uneasiness from my mind. It

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even appeared a duty incumbent upon me to attempt to reclaim them. I resolved therefore once more to return, and in spite of their contempt to give them my advice, and conquer them by perseverance. Going therefore among them again, I informed Mr. Jenkinson of my design, at which he laughed heartily, but communicated it to the rest. The proposal was received with the greatest good humour, as it promised to afford a new fund of entertainment to persons who had now no other resource for mirth, but what could be derived from ridicule or debauchery.

I therefore read them a portion of the service with a loud unaffected voice, and found my audience perfectly merry upon the occasion. Lewd whispers, groans of contrition burlesqued, winking, and coughing, alternately excited laughter. However, I continued with my natural solemnity to read on, sensible that what I did might amend some, but could itself receive no contamination from any.

After reading I entered upon my exhortation, which was rather calculated at first to amuse them than to reprove. I previously observed, that no other motive but their welfare could induce me to this; that I was their fellow-prisoner, and now got nothing by preaching. I was sorry, I said, to hear them so very profane; because they got nothing by it, but might lose a great deal: "For be assured, my friends," cried I, "for you are my friends, however the world "may disclaim your friendship, though you swore "twelve thousand oaths in a day, it would not put "one penny in your purse. Then what signifies call-"ing every moment upon the devil, and courting his "friendship, since you find how scurvily he uses you? "He has given you nothing here, you find, but a "mouthful of oaths and an empty belly; and by the "best accounts I have of him, he will give you no-"thing that's good hereafter.

"If used ill in our dealings with one man, we na-

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" turally go elsewhere. Were it not worth your while " then just to try how you may like the usage of " another master, who gives you fair promises at least " to come to him? Surely, my friends, of all stupi- " dity in the world his must be the greatest who, " after robbing an house, runs to the thief-takers for " protection. And yet how are you more wise? You " are all seeking comfort from one that has already " betrayed you, applying to a more malicious being " than any thief-taker of them all; for they only de- " coy and then hang you; but he decoys and hangs, " and, what is worst of all, will not let you loose after " the hangman has done."

When I had concluded, I received the compliments of my audience, some of whom came and shook me by the hand, swearing that I was a very honest fellow, and that they desired my farther acquaintance. I therefore promised to repeat my lecture next day, and actually conceived some hopes of making a reformation here; for it had ever been my opinion that no man was past the hour of amendment, every heart lying open to the shafts of reproof if the archer could but take a proper aim. When I had thus satisfied my mind, I went back to my apartment, where my wife prepared a frugal meal, while Mr. Jenkinson begged leave to add his dinner to ours, and partake of the pleasure, as he was kind enough to express it, of my conversation. He had not yet seen my family, for as they came to my apartment by a door in the narrow passage already described, by this means they avoided the common prison. Jenkinson at the first interview therefore seemed not a little struck with the beauty of my youngest daughter, which her pensive air contributed to heighten; and my little ones did not pass unnoticed.

" Alas, Doctor," cried he, " these children are too " handsome and too good for such a place as this!"

" Why, Mr. Jenkinson," replied I, " thank Heaven

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" my children are pretty tolerable in morals; and if " they be good, it matters little for the rest."

" I fancy, Sir," returned my fellow prisoner, " that " it must give you great comfort to have all this little " family about you."

" A comfort! Mr. Jenkinson," replied I, " yes, it is " indeed a comfort, and I would not be without them " for all the world; for they can make a dungeon " seem a palace. There is but one way in this life of " wounding my happiness, and that is by injuring " them."

" I am afraid then, Sir," cried he, " that I am in " some measure culpable: for I think I see here" (looking at my son Moses) " one that I have injured, " and by whom I wish to be forgiven."

My son immediately recollected his voice and features, though he had before seen him in disguise; and taking him by the hand with a smile forgave him. " Yet," continued he, " I can't help wondering at " what you could see in my face to think me a proper " mark for deception."

" My dear Sir," returned the other, " it was not " your face, but your white stockings and the black " riband in your hair, that allured me. But no dis- " paragement to your parts, I have deceived wiser " men than you in my time; and yet with all my " tricks, the blockheads have been too many for me " at last."

" I suppose," cried my son, " that the narrative of " such a life as yours must be extremely instructive " and amusing."

" Not much of either," returned Mr. Jenkinson. " Those relations which describe the tricks and vices " only of mankind, by increasing our suspicion in life, " retard our success. The traveller that distrusts every " person he meets, and turns back upon the appear- " ance of every man that looks like a robber, seldom " arrives in time at his journey's end.

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"Indeed, I think from my own experience, that the "knowing one is the silliest fellow under the sun. I "was thought cunning from my very childhood; when "but seven years old the ladies would say that I was "a perfect little man; at fourteen I knew the world, "cocked my hat, and loved the ladies; at twenty, "though I was perfectly honest, yet every one thought "me so cunning that not one would trust me. Thus "I was at last obliged to turn sharper in my own de-"fence, and have lived ever since, my head throbbing "with schemes to deceive, and my heart palpitating "with fears of detection. I used often to laugh at "your honest simple neighbour Flamborough, and "one way or other generally cheated him once a year. "Yet still the honest man went forward without sus-"picion, and grew rich while I still continued tricksy "and cunning, and was poor without the consolation "of being honest. However," continued he, "let me "know your case, and what has brought you here; "perhaps, though I have not skill to avoid a gaol "myself, I may extricate my friends."

In compliance with his curiosity, I informed him of the whole train of accidents and follies that had plunged me into my present troubles, and my utter inability to get free.

After hearing my story and pausing some minutes, he slapped his forehead as if he had hit upon some-thing material, and took his leave, saying he would try what could be done.

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CHAP. XXVII.

The same subject continued.

THE next morning I communicated to my wife and children the scheme I had planned of reforming the prisoners, which they received with universal disapprobation, alleging the impossibility and impropriety of it; adding, that my endeavours would no way contribute to their amendment, but might probably disgrace my calling.

"Excuse me," returned I, "these people, however "fallen, are still men, and that is a very good title to "my affections. Good counsel rejected returns to "enrich the giver's bosom; and though the instruc- "tion I communicate may not mend them, yet it will "assuredly mend myself. If these wretches, my "children, were princes, there would be thousands "ready to offer their ministry; but in my opinion "the heart that is buried in a dungeon is as precious "as that seated upon a throne. Yes, my treasures, "if I can mend them I will; perhaps they will not "all despise me. Perhaps I may catch up even one "from the gulph, and that will be great gain; for is "there upon earth a gem so precious as the human "soul?"

Thus saying I left them, and descended to the common prison, where I found the prisoners very merry, expecting my arrival, and each prepared with some gaol trick to play upon the doctor. Thus, as I was going to begin, one turned my wig awry, as if by accident, and then asked my pardon. A second, who stood at some distance, had a knack of spitting through his teeth, which fell in showers upon my

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book. A third would cry Amen in such an affected tone as gave the rest great delight. A fourth had slily picked my pocket of my spectacles. But there was one whose trick gave more universal pleasure than all the rest; for observing the manner in which I had disposed my books on the table before me, he very dextrously displaced one of them, and put an obscene jest-book of his own in the place. However, I took no notice of all that this mischievous groupe of little beings could do; but went on, perfectly sensible that what was ridiculous in my attempt would excite mirth only the first or second time, while what was serious would be permanent. My design succeeded, and in less than six days some were penitent, and all attentive.

It was now that I applauded my perseverance and address at thus giving sensibility to wretches divested of every moral feeling; and now began to think of doing them temporal services also, by rendering their situation somewhat more comfortable. Their time had hitherto been divided between famine and excess, tumultuous riot and bitter repining. Their only employment was quarrelling among each other, playing at cribbage, and cutting tobacco stoppers. From this last mode of idle industry I took the hint of setting such as chose to work, at cutting pegs for tobacconists and shoemakers, the proper wood being bought by a general subscription, and when manufactured, sold by my appointment; so that each earned something every day: a trifle indeed, but sufficient to maintain him.

I did not stop here, but instituted fines for the punishment of immorality, and rewards for peculiar industry. Thus in less than a fortnight I had formed them into something social and humane, and had the pleasure of regarding myself as a legislator, who had brought men from their native ferocity into friendship and obedience.

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And it were highly to be wished, that legislative power would thus direct the law rather to reformation than severity:—that it would seem convinced that the work of eradicating crimes is not by making punishments familiar, but formidable. Then, instead of our present prisons, which find or make men guilty, which inclose wretches for the commission of one crime, and return them, if returned alive, fitted for the perpetation of thousands, we should see, as in other parts of Europe, places of penitence and solitude, where the accused might be attended by such as could give them repentance if guilty, or new motives to virtue if innocent. And this, but not the increasing punishments, is the way to mend a state: nor can I avoid even questioning the validity of that right which social combinations have assumed, of capitally punishing offences of a slight nature. In cases of murder their right is obvious, as it is the duty of us all, from the law of self-defence, to cut off that man who has shewn a disregard for the life of another. Against such all nature arises in arms; but it is not so against him who steals my property. Natural law gives me no right to take away his life, as by that the horse he steals is as much his property as mine. If, then, I have any right, it must be from a compact made between us, that he who deprives the other of his horse shall die. But this is a false compact; because no man has a right to barter his life any more than to take it away, as it is not his own. And besides, the compact is inadequate, and would be set aside even in a court of modern equity, as there is a great penalty for a very trifling convenience; since it is far better that two men should live, than that one man should ride. But a compact that is false between two men is equally so between an hundred, or an hundred thousand; for as ten millions of circles can never make a square, so the united voice of myriads cannot lend

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the smallest foundation to falsehood. It is thus that reason speaks, and untutored nature says the same thing. Savages that are directed by natural law alone are very tender of the lives of each other; they seldom shed blood but to retaliate former cruelty.

Our Saxon ancestors, fierce as they were in war, had but few executions in times of peace; and in all commencing governments that have the print of nature still strong upon them, scarcely any crime is held capital.

It is among the citizens of a refined community that penal laws, which are in the hands of the rich, are laid upon the poor. Government while it grows older seems to acquire the moroseness of age; and as if our property were become dearer in proportion as it increased, as if the more enormous our wealth the more extensive our fears, all our possessions are paled up with new edicts every day, and hung round with gibbets to scare every invader.

I cannot tell whether it is from the number of our penal laws, or the licentiousness of our people, that this country should shew more convicts in a year than half the dominions of Europe united. Perhaps it is owing to both; for they mutually produce each other. When by indiscriminate penal laws a nation beholds the same punishment affixed to dissimilar degrees of guilt, from perceiving no distinction in the penalty, the people are led to lose all sense of distinction in the crime, and this distinction is the bulwark of all morality: thus the multitude of laws produce new vices, and new vices call for fresh restraints.

It were to be wished then that power, instead of contriving new laws to punish vice, instead of drawing hard the cords of society till a convulsion come to burst them, instead of cutting away wretches as useless before we have tried their utility, instead of converting correction into vengeance, it were to be

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wished that we tried the restrictive arts of government, and made law the protector, but not the tyrant, of the people. We should then find that creatures whose souls are held as dross, only wanted the hand of a refiner; we should then find that creatures now stuck up for long tortures, lest luxury should feel a momentary pang, might, if properly treated, serve to sinew the state in times of danger; that as their faces are like ours, their hearts are so too; that few minds are so base as that perseverance cannot amend; that a man may see his last crime without dying for it; and that very little blood will serve to cement our security.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Happiness and misery rather the result of prudence than of virtue in this life; temporal evils or felicities being regarded by Heaven as things merely in themselves trifling and unworthy its care in the distribution.

I HAD now been confined more than a fortnight, but had not since my arrival been visited by my dear Olivia, and I greatly longed to see her. Having communicated my wishes to my wife, the next morning the poor girl entered my apartment, leaning on her sister's arm. The change which I saw in her countenance struck me. The numberless graces that once resided there were now fled, and the hand of death seemed to have moulded every feature to alarm me. Her temples were sunk, her forehead was tense, and a fatal paleness sate upon her cheek.

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"I am glad to see thee, my dear," cried I; "but "why this dejection, Livy? I hope, my love, you have "too great a regard for me to permit disappointment "thus to undermine a life which I prize as my own. "Be cheerful, child, and we yet may see happier "days."

"You have ever, Sir," replied she, "been kind to "me, and it adds to my pain that I shall never have "an opportunity of sharing that happiness you pro- "mise. Happiness, I fear, is no longer reserved for "me here; and I long to be rid of a place where I "have only found distress. Indeed, Sir, I wish you "would make a proper submission to Mr. Thornhill; "it may in some measure induce him to pity you, "and it will give me relief in dying."

"Never, child," replied I, "never will I be "brought to acknowledge my daughter a prosti- "tute; for, though the world may look upon your "offence with scorn, let it be mine to regard it as a "mark of credulity, not of guilt. My dear, I am no "way miserable in this place, however dismal it may "seem; and be assured, that while you continue to "bless me by living, he shall never have my con- "sent to make you more wretched by marrying an- "other."

After the departure of my daughter, my fellow prisoner, who was by at this interview, sensibly enough expostulated upon my obstinacy in refusing a submission which promised to give me freedom. He observed, that the rest of my family was not to be sacrificed to the peace of one child alone, and she the only one who had offended me. "Besides," added he, "I don't know if it be just thus to obstruct the "union of man and wife, which you do at present, by "refusing to consent to a match you cannot hinder, "but may render unhappy."

"Sir," replied I, "you are unacquainted with the "man that oppresses us. I am very sensible that no

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" submission I can make could procure me liberty " even for an hour. I am told, that even in this " very room a debtor of his, no later than last year, " died for want. But, though my submission and " approbation could transfer me from hence to the " most beautiful apartment he is possessed of; yet I " would grant neither, as something whispers me " that it would be giving a sanction to adultery. " While my daughter lives, no other marriage of his " shall ever be legal in my eye. Were she removed, " indeed, I should be the basest of men, from any " resentment of my own, to attempt putting asunder " those who wish for an union. No, villain as he is, " I should then wish him married to prevent the " consequences of his future debaucheries. But " now should I not be the most cruel of all fathers, " to sign an instrument which must send my child " to the grave, merely to avoid a prison myself: and " thus, to escape one pang, break my child's heart " with a thousand?"

He acquiesced in the justice of this answer, but could not avoid observing, that he feared my daughter's life was already too much wasted to keep me long a prisoner. " However," continued he, " though " you refuse to submit to the nephew, I hope you " have no objections to laying your case before the " uncle, who has the first character in the kingdom " for every thing that is just and good. I would ad- " vise you to send him a letter by the post, intimating " all his nephew's ill usage; and my life for it that " in three days you shall have an answer." I thanked him for the hint, and instantly set about complying; but I wanted paper, and unluckily all our money had been laid out that morning in provisions: however, he supplied me.

For the three ensuing days I was in a state of anxiety to know what reception my letter might meet with; but in the mean time was frequently

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solicited by my wife to submit to any conditions rather than remain here, and every hour received repeated accounts of the decline of my daughter's health. The third day and the fourth arrived, but I received no answer to my letter: the complaints of a stranger against a favourite nephew were no way likely to succeed; so that these hopes soon vanished like all my former. My mind, however, still supported itself, though confinement and bad air began to make a visible alteration in my health, and my arm that had suffered in the fire grew worse. My children, however, sate by me, and while I was stretched on my straw, read to me by turns, or listened and wept at my instructions. But my daughter's health declined faster than mine; every message from her contributed to increase my apprehensions and pain. The fifth morning after I had written the letter which was sent to Sir William Thornhill, I was alarmed with an account that she was speechless. Now it was that confinement was truly painful to me; my soul was bursting from its prison to be near the pillow of my child, to comfort, to strengthen her, to receive her last wishes, and teach her soul the way to Heaven! Another account came. She was expiring, and yet I was debarred the small comfort of weeping by her. My fellow prisoner some time after came with the last account. He bade me be patient. She was dead!—— The next morning he returned, and found me with my two little ones, now my only companions, who were using all their innocent efforts to comfort me. They intreated to read to me, and bade me not to cry, for I was now too old to weep. "And is not my "sister an angel now, papa?" cried the eldest, "and "why then are you sorry for her? I wish I were "an angel out of this frightful place, if my papa were "with me." "Yes," added my youngest darling, "Heaven, where my sister is, is a finer place than

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" this, and there are none but good people there, and " the people here are very bad."

Mr. Jenkinson interrupted their harmless prattle, by observing that, now my daughter was no more, I should seriously think of the rest of my family, and attempt to save my own life, which was every day declining for want of necessaries and wholesome air. He added, that it was now incumbent on me to sacrifice any pride or resentment of my own to the welfare of those who depended on me for support; and that I was now, both by reason and justice, obliged to try to reconcile my landlord.

" Heaven be praised," replied I, " there is no pride " left me now, I should detest my own heart if I saw " either pride or resentment lurking there. On the " contrary, as my oppressor has been once my pa- " rishioner, I hope one day to present up an unpol- " luted soul at the eternal tribunal. No, Sir, I have " no resentment now, and though he has taken from " me what I held dearer than all his treasures, though " he has wrung my heart, for I am sick almost to " fainting, very sick, my fellow prisoner, yet that " shall never inspire me with vengeance. I am now " willing to approve his marriage, and if this sub- " mission can do him any pleasure, let him know, " that if I have done him any injury I am sorry for " it."

Mr. Jenkinson took pen and ink and wrote down my submission nearly as I have expressed it, to which I signed my name. My son was employed to carry the letter to Mr. Thornhill, who was then at his seat in the country. He went, and in about six hours returned with a verbal answer. He had some difficulty, he said, to get a sight of his landlord, as the servants were insolent and suspicious; but he accidentally saw him as he was going out upon business, preparing for his marriage, which was to be in three days. He continued to inform us that he

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stepped up in the humblest manner and delivered the letter, which when Mr. Thornhill had read, he said that all submission was now too late and unnecessary; that he had heard of our application to his uncle, which met with the contempt it deserved; and as for the rest, that all future applications should be directed to his attorney, not to him. He observed, however, that as he had a very good opinion of the discretion of the two young ladies, they might have been the most agreeable intercessors.

"Well, Sir," said I to my fellow prisoner, "you "now discover the temper of the man that oppresses "me. He can at once be facetious and cruel; but "let him use me as he will, I shall soon be free, in "spite of all his bolts to restrain me. I am now "drawing towards an abode that looks brighter as I "approach it: this expectation cheers my afflictions, "and though I leave an helpless family of orphans "behind me, yet they will not be utterly forsaken; "some friend, perhaps, will be found to assist them "for the sake of their poor father, and some may "charitably relieve them for the sake of their hea-"venly Father."

Just as I spoke, my wife, whom I had not seen that day before, appeared with looks of terror, and making efforts, but unable to speak. "Why, my "love," cried I, "why will you thus increase my "afflictions by your own? What though no submis-"sions can turn our severe master, though he has "doomed me to die in this place of wretchedness, "and though we have lost a darling child; yet still "you will find comfort in your other children when "I shall be no more." "We have indeed lost," returned she, "a darling child. My Sophia, my "dearest is gone, snatched from us, carried off by "ruffians!"

"How! madam," cried my fellow prisoner, "Miss "Sophia carried off by villains? sure it cannot be."

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She could only answer with a fixed look and a flood of tears. But one of the prisoner's wives, who was present, and came in with her, gave us a more distinct account: she informed us that as my wife, my daughter, and herself, were taking a walk together on the great road a little way out of the village, a post-chaise and pair drove up to them and instantly stopped. Upon which a well-dressed man, but not Mr. Thornhill, stepping out, clasped my daughter round the waist, and forcing her in, bade the postillion drive on, so that they were out of sight in a moment.

"Now," cried I, "the sum of my miseries is made "up, nor is it in the power of any thing on earth to "give me another pang. What! not one left! not "to leave me one! the monster! the child that was "next my heart! she had the beauty of an angel, "and almost the wisdom of an angel. But support "that woman, nor let her fall. Not to leave me "one!"

"Alas! my husband," said my wife, "you seem "to want comfort even more than I. Our distresses "are great; but I could bear this and more, if I "saw you but easy. They may take away my "children, and all the world, if they leave me but "you."

My son, who was present, endeavoured to moderate her grief; he bade us take comfort, for he hoped that we might still have reason to be thankful.——"My child," cried I, "look round the "world, and see if there be any happiness left me "now. Is not every ray of comfort shut out; while "all our bright prospects only lie beyond the grave!" ——"My dear father," returned he, "I hope there "is still something that will give you an interval of "satisfaction; for I have a letter from my brother "George."——"What of him, child?" interrupted I, "does he know our misery? I hope my boy is ex-"empt from any part of what his wretched family

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" suffers ?"——" Yes, Sir," returned he, " he is per-
" fectly gay, cheerful, and happy. His letter brings
" nothing but good news; he is the favourite of his
" colonel, who promises to procure him the very next
" lieutenancy that becomes vacant !"

" And are you sure of all this," cried my wife,
" are you sure that nothing ill has befallen my boy ?"
——" Nothing indeed, madam," returned my son,
" you shall see the letter, which will give you the
" highest pleasure; and if any thing can procure you
" comfort, I am sure that will."——" But are you
" sure," still repeated she, " that the letter is from
" himself, and that he is really so happy ?"——" Yes,
" Madam," replied he, " it is certainly his, and he
" will one day be the credit and the support of our
" family !"——" Then I thank Providence," cried
she, " that my last letter to him has miscarried.—
" Yes, my dear," continued she, turning to me, " I
" will now confess, that though the hand of Heaven
" is sore upon us in other instances, it has been fa-
" vourable here. By the last letter I wrote my son,
" which was in the bitterness of anger, I desired him,
" upon his mother's blessing, and if he had the heart
" of a man, to see justice done his father and sister,
" and avenge our cause. But thanks be to Him that
" directs all things, it has miscarried, and I am at
" rest." " Woman," cried I, " thou hast done very
" ill, and at another time my reproaches might have
" been more severe. Oh ! what a tremendous gulph
" hast thou escaped, that would have buried both
" thee and him in endless ruin. Providence, indeed,
" has here been kinder to us than we to ourselves.
" It has reserved that son to be the father and pro-
" tector of my children when I shall be away. How
" unjustly did I complain of being stripped of every
" comfort, when still I hear that he is happy and
" insensible of our afflictions; still kept in reserve
" to support his widowed mother, and to protect

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"his brothers and sisters. But what sisters has "he left? he has no sisters now, they are all gone, "robbed from me, and I am undone."——"Father," interrupted my son, "I beg you will give me leave "to read this letter, I know it will please you." Upon which, with my permission, he read as follows.

HONOURED SIR,

I HAVE called off my imagination a few moments from the pleasures that surround me, to fix it upon objects that are still more pleasing, the dear little fire-side at home. My fancy draws that harmless groupe as listening to every line of this with great composure. I view those faces with delight which never felt the deforming hand of ambition or distress! But whatever your happiness may be at home, I am sure it will be some addition to it to hear that I am perfectly pleased with my situation, and every way happy here.

Our regiment is countermanded, and is not to leave the kingdom; the colonel, who professes himself my friend, takes me with him to all companies where he is acquainted, and after my first visit I generally find myself received with increased respect upon repeating it. I danced last night with lady G——, and could I forget you know whom, I might be perhaps successful. But it is my fate still to remember others while I am myself forgotten by most of my absent friends; and in this number I fear, Sir, that I must consider you; for I have long expected the pleasure of a letter from home to no purpose. Olivia and Sophia too promised to write, but seem to have forgotten me. Tell them they are two arrant little baggages, and that I am this moment in a most violent passion with them: yet still, I know not how, though I want to bluster a little, my heart is respondent only to softer emotions. Then tell

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them, Sir, that after all, I love them affectionately, and be assured of my ever remaining

Your dutiful son.

"In all our miseries," cried I, "what thanks have "we not to return, that one at least of our family is "exempted from what we suffer. Heaven be his "guard, and keep my boy thus happy to be the "supporter of his widowed mother, and the father of "these two babes, which is all the patrimony I can "now bequeath him. May he keep their innocence "from the temptations of want, and be their con-"ductor in the paths of honour!" I had scarcely said these words when a noise like that of a tumult seemed to proceed from the prison below; it died away soon after, and a clanking of fetters was heard along the passage that led to my apartment. The keeper of the prison entered, holding a man all bloody, wounded and fettered with the heaviest irons. I looked with compassion on the wretch as he approached me, but with horror when I found it was my own son.——"My George! My George! and do "I behold thee thus. Wounded! Fettered! Is "this thy happiness! Is this the manner you return "to me! O that this sight could break my heart at "once, and let me die!"

"Where, Sir, is your fortitude?" returned my son with an intrepid voice. "I must suffer; my life "is forfeited, and let them take it."

I tried to restrain my passions for a few minutes in silence, but I thought I should have died with the effort.——"O my boy, my heart weeps to be-"hold thee thus, and I cannot, cannot help it. In "the moment that I thought thee blessed, and prayed "for thy safety, to behold thee thus again! Chained, "wounded! And yet the death of the youthful is "happy. But I am old, a very old man, and have "lived to see this day. To see my children all

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" untimely falling about me, while I continue a " wretched survivor in the midst of ruin! May all " the curses that ever sunk a soul fall heavy upon " the murderer of my children! May he live, like " me, to see———"

" Hold, Sir," replied my son, " or I shall blush " for thee. How, Sir, forgetful of your age, your " holy calling, thus to arrogate the justice of Hea- " ven, and fling those curses upward that must soon " descend to crush thy own gray head with destruc- " tion! No, Sir, let it be your care now to fit me " for that vile death I must shortly suffer, to arm " me with hope and resolution, to give me courage " to drink of that bitterness which must shortly be " my portion."

" My child, you must not die: I am sure no of- " fence of thine can deserve so vile a punishment. " My George could never be guilty of any crime to " make his ancestors ashamed of him."

" Mine, Sir," returned my son, " is, I fear, an un- " pardonable one. When I received my mother's " letter from home, I immediately came down, deter- " mined to punish the betrayer of our honour, and " sent him an order to meet me, which he answered, " not in person, but by his dispatching four of his " domestics to seize me. I wounded one who first " assaulted me, and I fear desperately; but the rest " made me their prisoner. The coward is determined " to put the law in execution against me; the proofs " are undeniable; I have sent a challenge, and as I " am the first transgressor upon the statute, I see no " hopes of pardon. But you have often charmed me " with your lessons of fortitude; let me now, Sir, find " them in your example."

" And, my son, you shall find them. I am now " raised above this world, and all the pleasures it can " produce. From this moment I break from my

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" heart all the ties that held it down to earth, and " will prepare to fit us both for eternity. Yes, my " son, I will point out the way, and my soul shall " guide yours in the ascent, for we will take our " flight together. I now see and am convinced you " can expect no pardon here, and I can only exhort " you to seek it at that greatest tribunal where we " both shall shortly answer. But let us not be nig- " gardly in our exhortation, but let all our fellow " prisoners have a share: good gaoler, let them be " permitted to stand here while I attempt to improve " them." Thus saying, I made an effort to rise from my straw, but wanted strength, and was able only to recline against the wall. The prisoners assembled themselves according to my directions, for they loved to hear my counsel; my son and his mother supported me on either side; I looked and saw that none were wanting, and then addressed them with the following exhortation.

CHAP. XXIX.

The equal dealings of Providence demonstrated with regard to the happy and the miserable here below. That from the nature of pleasure and pain, the wretched must be repaid the balance of their sufferings in the life hereafter.

My friends, my children, and fellow sufferers, when I reflect on the distribution of good and evil here below, I find that much has been given man to enjoy, yet still more to suffer. Though we should examine the whole world, we shall not find one man

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so happy as to have nothing left to wish for; but we daily see thousands who by suicide shew us they have nothing left to hope. In this life, then, it appears that we cannot be entirely blessed, but yet we may be completely miserable.

Why man should thus feel pain, why our wretchedness should be requisite in the formation of universal felicity; why, when all other systems are made perfect by the perfection of their subordinate parts, the great system should require for its perfection parts that are not only subordinate to others, but imperfect in themselves; these are questions that never can be explained, and might be useless if known. On this subject Providence has thought fit to elude our curiosity, satisfied with granting us motives to consolation.

In this situation man has called in the friendly assistance of philosophy; and Heaven, seeing the incapacity of that to console him, has given him the aid of religion. The consolations of philosophy are very amusing, but often fallacious. It tells us that life is filled with comforts, if we will but enjoy them; and on the other hand, that though we unavoidably have miseries here, life is short, and they will soon be over. Thus do these consolations destroy each other; for if life is a place of comfort, its shortness must be misery, and if it be long, our griefs are protracted. Thus philosophy is weak; but religion comforts in an higher strain. Man is here, it tells us, fitting up his mind, and preparing it for another abode. When the good man leaves the body and is all a glorious mind, he will find he has been making himself a heaven of happiness here, while the wretch that has been maimed and contaminated by his vices, shrinks from his body with terror, and finds that he has anticipated the vengeance of Heaven. To religion then we must hold in every circumstance of life for our truest comfort; for if

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already we are happy, it is a pleasure to think that we can make that happiness unending; and if we are miserable, it is very consoling to think that there is a place of rest. Thus to the fortunate religion holds out a continuance of bliss, to the wretched a change from pain.

But though religion is very kind to all men, it has promised peculiar rewards to the unhappy; the sick, the naked, the houseless, the heavy-laden, and the prisoner, have ever most frequent promises in our sacred law. The author of our religion every where professes himself the wretch's friend, and, unlike the false ones of this world, bestows all his caresses upon the forlorn. The unthinking have censured this as partiality, as a preference without merit to deserve it. But they never reflect that it is not in the power even of Heaven itself to make the offer of unceasing felicity as great a gift to the happy as to the miserable. To the first, eternity is but a single blessing, since at most it but increases what they already possess. To the latter it is a double advantage; for it diminishes their pain here, and rewards them with heavenly bliss hereafter.

But Providence is in another respect kinder to the poor than the rich; for as it thus makes the life after death more desirable, so it smooths the passage there. The wretched have had a long familiarity with every face of terror. The man of sorrows lays himself quietly down, without possessions to regret, and but few ties to stop his departure: he feels only nature's pang in the final separation, and this is no way greater than he has often fainted under before; for after a certain degree of pain, every new breach that death opens in the constitution, nature kindly covers with insensibility.

Thus Providence has given the wretched two advantages over the happy in this life, greater felicity in dying, and in heaven all that superiority of pleasure

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which arises from contrasted enjoyment. And this superiority, my friends, is no small advantage, and seems to be one of the pleasures of the poor man in the parable; for though he was already in heaven, and felt all the raptures it could give, yet it was mentioned as an addition to his happiness, that he had once been wretched, and now was comforted; that he had known what it was to be miserable, and now felt what it was to be happy.

Thus, my friends, you see religion does what philosophy could never do: it shews the equal dealings of Heaven to the happy and the unhappy, and levels all human enjoyments to nearly the same standard. It gives to both rich and poor the same happiness hereafter, and equal hopes to aspire after it; but if the rich have the advantage of enjoying pleasure here, the poor have the endless satisfaction of knowing what it was once to be miserable, when crowned with endless felicity hereafter; and even though this should be called a small advantage, yet being an eternal one, it must make up by duration what the temporal happiness of the great may have exceeded by intenseness.

These are, therefore, the consolations which the wretched have peculiar to themselves, and in which they are above the rest of mankind; in other respects they are below them. They who would know the miseries of the poor, must see life and endure it. To declaim on the temporal advantages they enjoy, is only repeating what none either believe or practise. The men who have the necessaries of living are not poor, and they who want them must be miserable. Yes, my friends, we must be miserable. No vain efforts of a refined imagination can soothe the wants of nature, can give elastic sweetness to the dark vapour of a dungeon, or ease to the throbbings of a broken heart. Let the philosopher from his couch of softness tell us that we can resist all these. Alas!

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the effort by which we resist them is still the greatest pain! Death is slight, and any man may sustain it; but torments are dreadful, and these no man can endure.

To us then, my friends, the promises of happiness in heaven should be peculiarly dear; for if our reward be in this life alone, we are then indeed of all men the most miserable. When I look round these gloomy walls, made to terrify as well as to confine us; this light that only serves to shew the horrors of the place, those shackles that tyranny has imposed, or crime made necessary; when I survey these emaciated looks, and hear those groans, Oh! my friends, what a glorious exchange would heaven be for these. To fly through regions unconfined as air, to bask in the sunshine of eternal bliss, to carol over endless hymns of praise, to have no master to threaten or insult us, but the form of Goodness himself for ever in our eyes! when I think of these things, death becomes the messenger of very glad tidings; when I think of these things, his sharpest arrow becomes the staff of my support; when I think of these things, what is there in life worth having? when I think of these things, what is there that should not be spurned away? kings in their palaces should groan for such advantages; but we, humbled as we are, should yearn for them.

And shall these things be ours? Ours they will certainly be if we but try for them; and what is a comfort, we are shut out from many temptations that would retard our pursuit. Only let us try for them, and they will certainly be ours, and what is still a comfort, shortly too; for if we look back on a past life it appears but a very short span, and whatever we may think of the rest of life, it will yet be found of less duration; as we grow older the days seem to grow shorter, and our intimacy with time ever lessens the perception of his stay. Then let us take

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comfort now, for we shall soon be at our journey's end; we shall soon lay down the heavy burthen laid by heaven upon us; and though death, the only friend of the wretched, for a little while mocks the weary traveller with the view, and like his horizon still flies before him; yet the time will certainly and shortly come when we shall cease from our toil; when the luxuriant great ones of the world shall no more tread us to the earth; when we shall think with pleasure of our sufferings below; when we shall be surrounded with all our friends, or such as deserved our friendship; when our bliss shall be unutterable, and, still to crown all, unending.

CHAP. XXX.

Happier prospects begin to appear. Let us be inflexible, and fortune will at last change in our favour.

When I had thus finished, and my audience was retired, the gaoler, who was one of the most humane of his profession, hoped I would not be displeased, as what he did was but his duty; observing, that he must be obliged to remove my son into a stronger cell, but that he should be permitted to revisit me every morning. I thanked him for his clemency, and, grasping my boy's hand, bade him farewell, and be mindful of the great duty that was before him.

I again therefore laid me down, and one of my little ones sate by my bed-side reading, when Mr. Jenkinson entering informed me that there was news of my daughter; for that she was seen by a person about two hours before in a strange gentleman's com-

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pany, and that they had stopped at a neighbouring village for refreshment, and seemed as if returning to town. He had scarcely delivered this news when the gaoler came, with looks of haste and pleasure, to inform me that my daughter was found. Moses came running in a moment after, crying out that his sister Sophy was below, and coming up with our old friend Mr. Burchell.

Just as he delivered this news my dearest girl entered, and, with looks almost wild with pleasure, ran to kiss me in a transport of affection. Her mother's tears and silence also shewed her pleasure.—"Here, "papa," cried the charming girl, "here is the brave "man to whom I owe my delivery; to this gentle- "man's intrepidity I am indebted for my happiness "and safety——" A kiss from Mr. Burchell, whose pleasure seemed even greater than her's, interrupted what she was going to add.

"Ah, Mr. Burchell," cried I, "this is but a "wretched habitation you now find us in; and we "are now very different from what you last saw us. "You were ever our friend: we have long discovered "our errors with regard to you, and repented of our "ingratitude. After the vile usage you then re- "ceived at my hands, I am almost ashamed to be- "hold your face; yet I hope you'll forgive me, as I "was deceived by a base ungenerous wretch, who "under the mask of friendship has undone me."

"It is impossible," replied Mr. Burchell, "that I "should forgive you, as you never deserved my re- "sentment. I partly saw your delusion then, and "as it was out of my power to restrain, I could only "pity it!"

"It was ever my conjecture," cried I, "that your "mind was noble; but now I find it so. But tell me, "my dear child, how hast thou been relieved, or who "the ruffians were who carried thee away."

"Indeed, Sir," replied she, "as to the villain who

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"carried me off I am yet ignorant. For as my "mamma and I were walking out, he came behind "us, and almost before I could call for help, forced "me into the post-chaise, and in an instant the horses "drove away. I met several on the road to whom I "cried out for assistance; but they disregarded my "intreaties. In the mean time the ruffian himself "used every art to hinder me from crying out: he "flattered and threatened by turns, and swore that if "I continued but silent he intended no harm. In "the mean time I had broken the canvass that he "had drawn up, and whom should I perceive at some "distance but your old friend Mr. Burchell, walking "along with his usual swiftness, with the great stick "for which we used so much to ridicule him. As "soon as we came within hearing I called out to him "by name, and intreated his help. I repeated my "exclamations several times, upon which with a very "loud voice he bade the postillion stop; but the boy "took no notice, but drove on with still greater speed. "I now thought he could never overtake us, when in "less than a minute I saw Mr. Burchell come running "up by the side of the horses, and with one blow "knock the postillion to the ground. The horses "when he was fallen soon stopped of themselves, and "the ruffian stepping out, with oaths and menaces "drew his sword, and ordered him at his peril to re-"tire; but Mr. Burchell running up shivered his "sword to pieces, and then pursued him for near a "quarter of a mile; but he made his escape. I was "at this time come out myself, willing to assist my "deliverer; but he soon returned to me in triumph. "The postillion, who was recovered, was going to "make his escape too; but Mr. Burchell ordered him "at his peril to mount again and drive back to town. "Finding it impossible to resist, he reluctantly com-"plied, though the wound he had received seemed to "me at least to be dangerous. He continued to com-

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" plain of the pain as we drove along, so that he at " last excited Mr. Burchell's compassion, who, at my " request, exchanged him for another at an inn where " we called on our return."

" Welcome then," cried I, " my child, and thou " her gallant deliverer, a thousand welcomes. Though " our cheer is but wretched, yet our hearts are ready " to receive you. And now, Mr. Burchell, as you " have delivered my girl, if you think her a recom- " pense she is yours; if you can stoop to an alliance " with a family so poor as mine, take her; obtain her " consent, as I know you have her heart, and you " have mine. And let me tell you, Sir, that I give " you no small treasure; she has been celebrated for " beauty, it is true, but that is not my meaning, I " give you up a treasure in her mind."

" But I suppose, Sir," cried Mr. Burchell, " that " you are apprised of my circumstances, and of my " incapacity to support her as she deserves?"

" If your present objection," replied I, " be meant " as an evasion of my offer, I desist: but I know no " man so worthy to deserve her as you: and if I could " give her thousands, and thousands sought her from " me, yet my honest brave Burchell should be my " dearest choice."

To all this his silence alone seemed to give a mortifying refusal, and, without the least reply to my offer, he demanded if we could not be furnished with refreshments from the next inn, to which being answered in the affirmative, he ordered them to send in the best dinner that could be provided upon such short notice. He bespoke also a dozen of their best wine; and some cordials for me; adding with a smile, that he would stretch a little for once; and though in a prison, asserted he was never better disposed to be merry. The waiter soon made his appearance with preparations for dinner, a table was lent us by the gaoler, who seemed remarkably assiduous, the wine

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was disposed in order, and two very well-dressed dishes were brought in.

My daughter had not yet heard of her poor brother's melancholy situation, and we all seemed unwilling to damp her cheerfulness by the relation. But it was in vain that I attempted to appear cheerful, the circumstances of my unfortunate son broke through all efforts to dissemble; so that I was at last obliged to damp our mirth by relating his misfortunes, and wishing that he might be permitted to share with us in this little interval of satisfaction. After my guests were recovered from the consternation my account had produced, I requested also that Mr. Jenkinson, a fellow prisoner, might be admitted, and the gaoler granted my request with an air of unusual submission. The clanking of my son's irons was no sooner heard along the passage than his sister ran impatiently to meet him; while Mr. Burchell in the mean time asked me if my son's name were George, to which replying in the affirmative he still continued silent. As soon as my boy entered the room, I could perceive he regarded Mr. Burchell with a look of astonishment and reverence. "Come on," cried I, "my son; though we are fallen very low, yet "Providence has been pleased to grant us some small "relaxation from pain. Thy sister is restored to us, "and there is her deliverer: to that brave man it is "that I am indebted for yet having a daughter; give "him, my boy, the hand of friendship, he deserves "our warmest gratitude.'

My son seemed all this while regardless of what I said, and still continued fixed at respectful distance. ——"My dear brother," cried his sister, "why don't "you thank my good deliverer? the brave should "ever love each other."

He still continued his silence and astonishment, till our guest at last perceived himself to be known, and assuming all his native dignity desired my son to

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come forward. Never before had I seen any thing so truly majestic as the air he assumed upon this occasion. The greatest object in the universe, says a certain philosopher, is a good man struggling with adversity; yet there is still a greater, which is the good man that comes to relieve it. After he had regarded my son for some time with a superior air, "I again find," said he, "unthinking boy, that the "same crime"—But here he was interrupted by one of the gaoler's servants, who came to inform us that a person of distinction, who had driven into town with a chariot and several attendants, sent his respects to the gentleman that was with us, and begged to know when he should think proper to be waited upon.——"Bid the fellow wait," cried our guest, "till I shall have leisure to receive him;" and then turning to my son, "I again find, Sir," proceeded he, "that you are guilty of the same offence, "for which you once had my reproof, and for which "the law is now preparing its justest punishments. "You imagine, perhaps, that a contempt for your "own life gives you a right to take that of another: "but where, Sir, is the difference between a duellist "who hazards a life of no value, and the murderer "who acts with greater security? Is it any diminu- "tion of the gamester's fraud, when he alleges that "he has staked a counter?"

"Alas! Sir," cried I, "whoever you are, pity the "poor misguided creature; for what he has done "was in obedience to a deluded mother, who, in the "bitterness of her resentment, required him upon "her blessing to avenge her quarrel. Here, Sir, is "the letter, which will serve to convince you of her "imprudence, and diminish his guilt."

He took the letter, and hastily read it over: "This," says he, "though not a perfect excuse, is "such a palliation of his fault, as induces me to for- "give him. And now, Sir," continued he, kindly

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taking my son by the hand, "I see you are sur-
"prised at finding me here; but I have often visited
"prisons upon occasions less interesting. I am now
"come to see justice done a worthy man, for whom I
"have the most sincere esteem. I have long been a
"disguised spectator of thy father's benevolence. I
"have at his little dwelling enjoyed respect uncon-
"taminated by flattery, and have received that hap-
"piness that courts could not give, from the amusing
"simplicity round his fire-side. My nephew has
"been apprised of my intentions of coming here, and,
"I find, is arrived; it would be wronging him and
"you to condemn him without examination; if there
"be injury, there shall be redress; and this I may
"say without boasting, that none have ever taxed
"the injustice of Sir William Thornhill."

We now found the personage whom we had so long entertained as an harmless amusing companion, was no other than the celebrated Sir William Thornhill, to whose virtues and singularities scarcely any were strangers. The poor Mr. Burchell was in reality a man of large fortune and great interest, to whom senates listened with applause, and whom party heard with conviction; who was the friend of his country, but loyal to his king. My poor wife, recollecting her former familiarity, seemed to shrink with apprehension; but Sophia, who a few moments before thought him her own, now perceiving the immense distance to which he was removed by fortune, was unable to conceal her tears.

"Ah, Sir," cried my wife with a piteous aspect, "how is it possible that I can ever have your for-
"giveness? the slights you received from me the last
"time I had the honour of seeing you at our house,
"and the jokes which I audaciously threw out, these
"jokes, Sir, I fear can never be forgiven."

"My dear good lady," returned he with a smile, "if you had your joke, I had my answer: I'll leave

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" it to all the company, if mine were not as good as " yours. To say the truth, I know nobody whom I " am disposed to be angry with at present but the " fellow who so frighted my little girl here. I had " not even time to examine the rascal's person so as " to describe him in an advertisement. Can you tell " me, Sophia, my dear, whether you should know him " again ?"

" Indeed, Sir," replied she, " I can't be positive ; " yet now I recollect he had a large mark over one " of his eye-brows." " I ask pardon, madam," interrupted Jenkinson, who was by, " but be so good as " to inform me if the fellow wore his own red hair ?" —" Yes, I think so," cried Sophia.—" And did your " honour," continued he, turning to Sir William, " observe the length of his legs ?"—" I can't be sure " of their length," cried the Baronet, " but I am " convinced of their swiftness ; for he outran me, " which is what I thought few men in the kingdom " could have done."—" Please your honour," cried Jenkinson, " I know the man : it is certainly the " same ; the best runner in England ; he has beaten " Pinwire of Newcastle ; Timothy Baxter is his " name, I know him perfectly, and the very place of " his retreat this moment. If your honour will bid " Mr. gaoler let two of his men go with me, I'll en- " gage to produce him to you in an hour at farthest." Upon this the gaoler was called, who instantly appearing, Sir William demanded if he knew him. " Yes, please your honour," replied the gaoler, " I " know Sir William Thornhill well, and every body " that knows any thing of him will desire to know " more of him."——" Well, then," said the Baronet, " my request is, that you will permit this man " and two of your servants to go upon a message by " my authority; and as I am in the commission of " the peace, I undertake to secure you."——" Your " promise is sufficient," replied the other, " and you

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" may at a minute's warning send them over England " whenever your honour thinks fit."

In pursuance of the gaoler's compliance, Jenkinson was despatched in search of Timothy Baxter, while we were amused with the assiduity of our youngest boy Bill, who had just come in and climbed up to Sir William's neck in order to kiss him. His mother was immediately going to chastise his familiarity, but the worthy man prevented her; and taking the child all ragged as he was upon his knee, " What, Bill, you " chubby rogue," cried he, " do you remember your " old friend Burchell? and Dick too, my honest " veteran, are you here? you shall find I have not for- " got you." So saying, he gave each a large piece of gingerbread, which the poor fellows ate very heartily, as they had got that morning but a very scanty breakfast.

We now sate down to dinner, which was almost cold; but previously, my arm still continuing painful, Sir William wrote a prescription, for he had made the study of physic his amusement, and was more than moderately skilled in the profession: this being sent to an apothecary who lived in the place, my arm was dressed, and I found almost instantaneous relief. We were waited upon at dinner by the gaoler himself, who was willing to do our guest all the honour in his power. But before we had well dined another message was brought from his nephew, desiring permission to appear in order to vindicate his innocence and honour; with which request the Baronet complied, and desired Mr. Thornhill to be introduced.

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CHAP. XXXI.

Former benevolence now repaid with unexpected interest.

Mr. Thornhill made his appearance with a smile, which he seldom wanted, and was going to embrace his uncle, which the other repulsed with an air of disdain. "No fawning, Sir, at present," cried the Baronet, with a look of severity, "the only way to "my heart is by the road of honour; but here I only "see complicated instances of falsehood, cowardice, "and oppression. How is it, Sir, that this poor "man, for whom I know you professed a friendship, "is used thus hardly? His daughter vilely seduced "as a recompence for his hospitality, and he himself "thrown into a prison, perhaps but for resenting the "insult? His son too, whom you feared to face as a "man——"

"Is it possible, Sir," interrupted his nephew, "that "my uncle could object that as a crime, which his "repeated instructions alone have persuaded me to "avoid?"

"Your rebuke," cried Sir William, "is just; you "have acted in this instance prudently and well, "though not quite as your father would have done: "my brother indeed was the soul of honour; but "thou—yes, you have acted in this instance perfectly "right, and it has my warmest approbation."

"And I hope," said his nephew, "that the rest of "my conduct will not be found to deserve censure. "I appeared, Sir, with this gentleman's daughter at

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"some places of public amusement: thus what was "levity, scandal called by a harsher name, and it was "reported that I had debauched her. I waited on "her father in person willing to clear the thing to his "satisfaction, and he received me only with insult "and abuse. As for the rest, with regard to his "being here, my attorney and steward can best in-"form you, as I commit the management of business "entirely to them. If he has contracted debts and "is unwilling or even unable to pay them, it is their "business to proceed in this manner, and I see no "hardship or injustice in pursuing the most legal "means of redress."

"If this," cried Sir William, "be as you have "stated it, there is nothing unpardonable in your "offence; and though your conduct might have been "more generous in not suffering this gentleman to be "oppressed by subordinate tyranny, yet it has been "at least equitable."

"He cannot contradict a single particular," replied the 'Squire; "I defy him to do so, and several of my "servants are ready to attest what I say. Thus, Sir," continued he, finding that I was silent, for in fact I could not contradict him, "thus, Sir, my own in-"nocence is vindicated; but though at your intreaty "I am ready to forgive this gentleman every other "offence, yet his attempts to lessen me in your "esteem excite a resentment that I cannot govern. "And this too at a time when his son was actually "preparing to take away my life; this, I say, was such "guilt that I am determined to let the law take its "course. I have here the challenge that was sent "me, and two witnesses to prove it; one of my ser-"vants has been wounded dangerously; and even "though my uncle himself should dissuade me, which "I know he will not, yet I will see public justice "done, and he shall suffer for it."

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"Thou monster," cried my wife, "hast thou not "had vengeance enough already, but must my poor "boy feel thy cruelty? I hope that good Sir Wil- "liam will protect us, for my son is as innocent as "a child; I am sure he is, and never did harm to "man."

"Madam," replied the good man, "your wishes "for his safety are not greater than mine; but I am "sorry to find his guilt too plain; and if my nephew "persists—" But the appearance of Jenkinson and the gaoler's two servants now called off our attention, who entered hawling in a tall man very genteelly dressed, and answering the description already given of the ruffian who had carried off my daughter.—— "Here," cried Jenkinson, pulling him in, "here we "have him; and if ever there was a candidate for "Tyburn, this is one."

The moment Mr. Thornhill perceived the prisoner and Jenkinson who had him in custody, he seemed to shrink back with terror. His face became pale with conscious guilt, and he would have withdrawn; but Jenkinson, who perceived his design, stopped him.——"What, 'Squire," cried he, "are you "ashamed of your two old acquaintances, Jenkinson "and Baxter? but this is the way that all great "men forget their friends, though I am resolved we "will not forget you. Our prisoner, please your ho- "nour," continued he, turning to Sir William, "has "already confessed all. This is the gentleman re- "ported to be so dangerously wounded: he declares "that it was Mr. Thornhill who first put him upon "this affair; that he gave him the clothes he now "wears to appear like a gentleman, and furnished "him with the post-chaise. The plan was laid "between them, that he should carry off the young "lady to a place of safety, and that there he should "threaten and terrify her; but Mr. Thornhill was "to come in in the mean time, as if by accident, to

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" her rescue, and that they should fight awhile, and " then he was to run off, by which Mr. Thornhill " would have the better opportunity of gaining her " affections himself under the character of her de- " fender."

Sir William remembered the coat to have been worn by his nephew, and all the rest the prisoner himself confirmed by a more circumstantial account; concluding, that Mr. Thornhill had often declared to him that he was in love with both sisters at the same time.

" Heavens!" cried Sir William, " what a viper " have I been fostering in my bosom! And so fond " of public justice too as he seemed to be! But he " shall have it; secure him, Mr. gaoler—yet hold, " I fear there is not legal evidence to detain him."

Upon this, Mr. Thornhill with the utmost humility intreated that two such abandoned wretches might not be admitted as evidences against him, but that his servants should be examined.——" Your " servants!" replied Sir William, " wretch, call them " yours no longer:—but come let us hear what those " fellows have to say; let his butler be called."

When the butler was introduced, he soon perceived by his former master's looks that all his power was now over. " Tell me," cried Sir William sternly, " have you ever seen your master and that fellow " dressed up in his clothes in company together?" " Yes, please your honour," cried the butler, " a " thousand times: he was the man that always " brought him his ladies."—" How," interrupted young Mr. Thornhill, " this to my face!"——" Yes," replied the butler, " or to any man's face. To tell " you a truth, Master Thornhill, I never either loved " or liked you, and I don't care if I tell you now a " piece of my mind."——" Now then," cried Jenkinson, " tell his honour whether you know any " thing of me."——" I can't say," replied the butler,

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"that I know much good of you. The night that "gentleman's daughter was deluded to our house "you were one of them."——"So then," cried Sir William, "I find you have brought a very fine wit- "ness to prove your innocence: thou stain to huma- "nity! to associate with such wretches!" (But continuing his examination) "You tell me, Mr. butler, "that this was the person who brought him this old "gentleman's daughter."—"No, please your ho- "nour," replied the butler, "he did not bring her, "for the 'Squire himself undertook that business; "but he brought the priest that pretended to marry "them."—"It is but too true," cried Jenkinson, "I "cannot deny it; that was the employment assigned "me, and I confess it to my confusion."

"Good heavens!" exclaimed the Baronet, "how "every new discovery of his villainy alarms me. All "his guilt is now too plain, and I find his procedure "was dictated by tyranny, cowardice, and revenge; "at my request, Mr. gaoler, set this young officer "now your prisoner free, and trust to me for the "consequences. I'll make it my business to set the "affair in a proper light to my friend the magistrate "who has committed him. But where is the unfor- "tunate young lady herself? let her appear to con- "front this wretch; I long to know by what arts he "has seduced her. Intreat her to come in. Where "is she?"

"Ah, Sir," said I, "that question stings me to "the heart: I was once indeed happy in a daughter, "but her miseries——" Another interruption here prevented me; for who should make her appearance but Miss Arabella Wilmot, who was next day to have been married to Mr. Thornhill. Nothing could equal her surprise at seeing Sir William and his nephew here before her; for her arrival was quite accidental. It happened that she and the old gentleman her father were passing through the town on their

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way to her aunt's, who had insisted that her nuptials with Mr. Thornhill should be consummated at her house; but stopping for refreshment, they put up at an inn at the other end of the town. It was there from the window that the young lady happened to observe one of my little boys playing in the street, and instantly sending a footman to bring the child to her, she learned from him some account of our misfortunes; but was still kept ignorant of young Mr. Thornhill's being the cause. Though her father made several remonstrances on the impropriety of going to a prison to visit us, yet they were ineffectual; she desired the child to conduct her, which he did, and it was thus she surprised us at a juncture so unexpected.

Nor can I go on without a reflection on those accidental meetings, which, though they happen every day, seldom excite our surprise but upon some extraordinary occasion. To what a fortuitous concurrence do we not owe every pleasure and convenience of our lives. How many seeming accidents must unite before we can be clothed or fed. The peasant must be disposed to labour, the shower must fall, the wind fill the merchant's sail, or numbers must want the usual supply.

We all continued silent for some moments, while my charming pupil, which was the name I generally gave this young lady, united in her looks compassion and astonishment, which gave new finishings to her beauty. "Indeed, my dear Mr. Thornhill," cried she to the 'Squire, who she supposed was come here to succour and not to oppress us, "I take it a little "unkindly that you should come here without me, "or never inform me of the situation of a family so "dear to us both: you know I should take as much "pleasure in contributing to the relief of my reverend "old master here, whom I shall ever esteem as you "can. But I find that, like your uncle, you take a "pleasure in doing good in secret."

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"He find pleasure in doing good!" cried Sir William, interrupting her. "No, my dear, his pleasures are as base as he is. You see in him, madam, "as complete a villain as ever disgraced humanity. "A wretch, who after having deluded this poor "man's daughter, after plotting against the innocence of her sister, has thrown the father into prison, and the eldest son into fetters, because he had "courage to face her betrayer. And give me leave, "madam, now to congratulate you upon an escape "from the embraces of such a monster."

"O goodness," cried the lovely girl, "how have "I been deceived! Mr. Thornhill informed me for "certain that this gentleman's eldest son, Captain "Primrose, was gone off to America with his new-"married lady."

"My sweetest miss," cried my wife, "he has told "you nothing but falsehoods. My son George never "left the kingdom, nor ever was married.—Though "you have forsaken him, he has always loved you too "well to think of any body else; and I have heard "him say he would die a bachelor for your sake." She then proceeded to expatiate upon the sincerity of her son's passion, she set his duel with Mr. Thornhill in a proper light, from thence she made a rapid digression to the 'Squire's debaucheries, his pretended marriages, and ended with a most insulting picture of his cowardice.

"Good heaven!" cried Miss Wilmot, "how very "near have I been to the brink of ruin! Ten thou-"sand falsehoods has this gentleman told me! He "had at last art enough to persuade me that my pro-"mise to the only man I esteemed was no longer "binding, since he had been unfaithful. By his "falsehoods I was taught to detest one equally brave "and generous!"

But by this time my son was freed from the incumbrances of justice, as the person supposed to be

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wounded was detected to be an impostor. Mr. Jenkinson also, who had acted as his valet-de-chambre, had dressed up his hair, and furnished him with whatever was necessary to make a genteel appearance. He now therefore entered, handsomely dressed in his regimentals, and, without vanity (for I am above it), he appeared as handsome a fellow as ever wore a military dress. As he entered, he made Miss Wilmot a modest and distant bow, for he was not as yet acquainted with the change which the eloquence of his mother had wrought in his favour. But no decorums could restrain the impatience of his blushing mistress to be forgiven. Her tears, her looks, all contributed to discover the real sensations of her heart, for having forgotten her former promise, and having suffered herself to be deluded by an impostor. My son appeared amazed at her condescension, and could scarcely believe it real.—"Sure, madam," cried he, "this is but delusion! I can never have merited "this! To be blessed thus is to be too happy."—— "No, Sir," replied she, "I have been deceived, "basely deceived, else nothing could have ever made "me unjust to my promise. You know my friend- "ship, you have long known it; but forget what I "have done, and as you once had my warmest vows "of constancy, you shall now have them repeated; "and be assured that if your Arabella cannot be "yours, she shall never be another's."—"And no "other's you shall be," cried Sir William, "if I have "any influence with your father."

This hint was sufficient for my son Moses, who immediately flew to the inn where the old gentleman was, to inform him of every circumstance that had happened. But in the mean time the 'Squire perceiving that he was on every side undone, now finding that no hopes were left from flattery or dissimulation, concluded that his wisest way would be to turn and face his pursuers. Thus laying aside all

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shame, he appeared the open hardy villain. "I find "then," cried he, "that I am to expect no justice "here; but I am resolved it shall be done me. You "shall know, Sir," turning to Sir William, "I am "no longer a poor dependant upon your favours. I "scorn them. Nothing can keep Miss Wilmot's "fortune from me, which, I thank her father's assi- "duity, is pretty large. The articles and a bond for "her fortune are signed, and safe in my possession. "It was her fortune, not her person, that induced me "to wish for this match; and possessed of the one, "let who will take the other."

This was an alarming blow; Sir William was sensible of the justice of his claims, for he had been instrumental in drawing up the marriage articles himself. Miss Wilmot therefore perceiving that her fortune was irretrievably lost; turning to my son, she asked if the loss of fortune could lessen her value to him. "Though fortune," said she, "is out of my "power, at least I have my hand to give."

"And that, madam," cried her real lover, "was "indeed all that you ever had to give; at least, all "that I ever thought worth the acceptance. And I "now protest, my Arabella, by all that's happy, "your want of fortune this moment increases my "pleasure, as it serves to convince my sweet girl of "my sincerity."

Mr. Wilmot now entering, he seemed not a little pleased at the danger his daughter had just escaped, and readily consented to a dissolution of the match. But finding that her fortune, which was secured to Mr. Thornhill by bond, would not be given up, nothing could exceed his disappointment. He now saw that his money must all go to enrich one who had no fortune of his own. He could bear his being a rascal, but to want an equivalent to his daughter's fortune was wormwood. He sate therefore for some minutes employed in the most mortifying speculations;

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till Sir William attempted to lessen his anxiety.—"I must confess, Sir," cried he, "that your present "disappointment does not entirely displease me. "Your immoderate passion for wealth is now justly "punished. But though the young lady cannot be "rich, she has still a competence sufficient to give "content. Here you see an honest young soldier "who is willing to take her without fortune; they "have long loved each other, and for the friendship "I bear his father, my interest shall not be wanting "in his promotion. Leave then that ambition which "disappoints you, and for once admit that happiness "which courts your acceptance."

"Sir William," replied the old gentleman, "be "assured I never yet forced her inclinations, nor will "I now. If she still continues to love this young "gentleman, let her have him with all my heart.— "There is still, thank heaven, some fortune left, "and your promise will make it something more. "Only let my old friend here (meaning me) give me "a promise of settling six thousand pounds upon my "girl if ever he should come to his fortune, and I "am ready this night to be the first to join them "together."

As it now remained with me to make the young couple happy, I readily gave a promise of making the settlement he required, which, from one who had such little expectations as I, was no great favour.—We had now therefore the satisfaction of seeing them fly into each other's arms in a transport.—"After "all my misfortunes," cried my son George, "to be "thus rewarded! Sure this is more than I could "ever have presumed to hope for. To be possessed "of all that's good, and after such an interval of "pain! My warmest wishes could never rise so "high!"

"Yes, my George," returned his lovely bride,

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" now let the wretch take my fortune; since you are " happy without it, so am I. Oh, what an exchange " have I made from the basest of men to the dearest, " best!—Let him enjoy our fortune, I now can be " happy even in indigence."——" And I promise " you," cried the 'Squire, with a malicious grin, " that I shall be very happy with what you despise." ——" Hold, hold, Sir," cried Jenkinson, " there are " two words to that bargain. As for that lady's for- " tune, Sir, you shall never touch a single stiver " of it. Pray your honour," continued he to Sir William, " can the 'Squire have this lady's fortune " if he be married to another?"——" How can you " make such a simple demand?" replied the Baronet; " undoubtedly he cannot."—" I am sorry for that," cried Jenkinson; " for as this gentleman and I have " been old fellow sporters, I have a friendship for " him. But I must declare, well as I love him, " that his contract is not worth a tobacco-stopper, " for he is married already."——" You lie, like a " rascal," returned the 'Squire, who seemed roused by this insult; " I never was legally married to any " woman."

" Indeed, begging your honour's pardon," replied the other, " you were; and I hope you will shew a " proper return of friendship to your own honest " Jenkinson, who brings you a wife; and if the com- " pany restrains their curiosity a few minutes, they " shall see her."——So saying he went off with his usual celerity, and left us all unable to form any probable conjecture as to his design.——" Ay, let " him go," cried the 'Squire; " whatever else I may " have done, I defy him there. I am too old now to " be frightened with squibs."

" I am surprised," said the Baronet, " what the " fellow can intend by this. Some low piece of " humour, I suppose."——" Perhaps, Sir," replied I,

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" he may have a more serious meaning. For when " we reflect on the various schemes this gentleman " has laid to seduce innocence, perhaps some one " more artful than the rest has been found able to " deceive him. When we consider what numbers " he has ruined, how many parents now feel with " anguish the infamy and the contamination which " he has brought into their families, it would not " surprise me if some one of them——Amazement! " Do I see my lost daughter! Do I hold her! It " is, it is my life, my happiness. I thought thee " lost, my Olivia, yet still I hold thee — and still " thou shalt live to bless me." The warmest transports of the fondest lover were not greater than mine, when I saw him introduce my child, and held my daughter in my arms, whose silence only spoke her raptures.

" And art thou returned to me, my darling," cried I, " to be my comfort in age!"——" That she is," cried Jenkinson, " and make much of her, for she " is your own honourable child, and as honest a " woman as any in the whole room, let the other be " who she will. And as for you, 'Squire, as sure as " you stand there, this young lady is your lawful " wedded wife. And to convince you that I speak " nothing but truth, here is the licence by which " you were married together."——So saying he put the licence into the Baronet's hands, who read it, and found it perfect in every respect. " And now, " gentlemen," continued he, " I find you are sur- " prised at all this; but a few words will explain the " difficulty. That there 'Squire of renown, for " whom I have a great friendship, but that's be- " tween ourselves, has often employed me in doing " odd little things for him. Among the rest, he " commissioned me to procure him a false licence " and a false priest, in order to deceive this young " lady. But as I was very much his friend, what

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"did I do but went and got a true licence and a "true priest, and married them both as fast as the "cloth could make them. Perhaps you'll think it "was generosity that made me do all this. But no. "To my shame I confess it, my only design was "to keep the licence and let the 'Squire know, that "I could prove it upon him whenever I thought "proper, and so make him come down whenever "I wanted money." A burst of pleasure now seemed to fill the whole apartment; our joy reached even to the common room, where the prisoners themselves sympathised,

> And shook their chains
> In transport and rude harmony.

Happiness was expanded upon every face, and even Olivia's cheek seemed flushed with pleasure. To be thus restored to reputation, to friends and fortune at once, was a rapture sufficient to stop the progress of decay, and restore former health and vivacity. But perhaps among all there was not one who felt sincerer pleasure than I. Still holding the dear-loved child in my arms, I asked my heart if these transports were not delusion. "How could "you," cried I, turning to Mr. Jenkinson, "how "could you add to my miseries by the story of her "death? But it matters not; my pleasure at finding her again is more than a recompense for the "pain."

"As to your question," replied Jenkinson, "that "is easily answered. I thought the only probable "means of freeing you from prison, was by submitting to the 'Squire, and consenting to his marriage with the other young lady. But these you "had vowed never to grant while your daughter was "living; there was therefore no other method to "bring things to bear, but by persuading you that "she was dead. I prevailed on your wife to join

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" in the deceit, and we have not had a fit opportunity " of undeceiving you till now."

In the whole assembly now there only appeared two faces that did not glow with transport. Mr. Thornhill's assurance had entirely forsaken him: he now saw the gulph of infamy and want before him, and trembled to take the plunge. He therefore fell on his knees before his uncle, and in a voice of piercing misery implored compassion. Sir William was going to spurn him away, but at my request he raised him, and after pausing a few moments, " Thy " vices, crimes, and ingratitude," cried he, " de- " serve no tenderness; yet thou shalt not be entirely " forsaken: a bare competence shall be supplied to " support the wants of life, but not its follies. This " young lady, thy wife, shall be put in possession of " a third part of that fortune which once was thine, " and from her tenderness alone thou art to expect " any extraordinary supplies for the future." He was going to express his gratitude for such kindness in a set speech; but the Baronet prevented him by bidding him not aggravate his meanness, which was already but too apparent. He ordered him at the same time to be gone, and from all his former domestics to choose one such as he should think proper, which was all that should be granted to attend him.

As soon as he left us, Sir William very politely stepped up to his new niece with a smile and wished her joy. His example was followed by Miss Wilmot and her father; my wife too kissed her daughter with much affection, as, to use her own expression, she was now made an honest woman of. Sophia and Moses followed in turn, and even our benefactor Jenkinson desired to be admitted to that honour. Our satisfaction seemed scarcely capable of increase. Sir William, whose greatest pleasure was in doing good, now looked round with a countenance open as the sun, and saw nothing but joy in the looks of all except

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that of my daughter Sophia, who, for some reasons we could not comprehend, did not seem perfectly satisfied. "I think now," cried he with a smile, "that "all the company except one or two seem perfectly "happy. There only remains an act of justice for "me to do. You are sensible, Sir," continued he, turning to me, "of the obligations we both owe Mr. "Jenkinson. And it is but just we should both re- "ward him for it. Miss Sophia will, I am sure, make "him very happy, and he shall have from me five "hundred pounds as her fortune, and upon this I "am sure they can live very comfortably together. "Come, Miss Sophia, what say you to this match "of my making? Will you have him?"——My poor girl seemed almost sinking into her mother's arms at the hideous proposal.—"Have him, Sir!" cried she faintly. "No, Sir, never."——"What," cried he again, "not have Mr. Jenkinson, your benefactor, "a handsome young fellow with five hundred "pounds and good expectations!"——"I beg, Sir," returned she, scarcely able to speak, "that you'll "desist, and not make me so very wretched."—"Was "ever such obstinacy known," cried he again, "to "refuse a man whom the family has such infinite ob- "ligations to, who has preserved your sister, and who "has five hundred pounds! What, not have him!" ——"No, Sir, never," replied she angrily; "I'd "sooner die first."——"If that be the case then," cried he, "if you will not have him—I think I must "have you myself." And so saying he caught her to his breast with ardour. "My loveliest, my most "sensible of girls," cried he, "how could you ever "think your own Burchell could deceive you, or that "Sir William Thornhill could ever cease to admire "a mistress that loved him for himself alone? I have "for some years sought for a woman, who a stranger "to my fortune could think that I had merit as a "man. After having tried in vain, even amongst "the pert and the ugly, how great at last must be

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" my rapture to have made a conquest over such " sense and such heavenly beauty!" Then turning to Jenkinson, " As I cannot, Sir, part with this " young lady myself, for she has taken a fancy to the " cut of my face, all the recompense I can make is to " give you her fortune, and you may call upon my " steward to-morrow for five hundred pounds."

Thus we had all our compliments to repeat, and Lady Thornhill underwent the same round of ceremony that her sister had done before. In the mean time Sir William's gentleman appeared to tell us that the equipages were ready to carry us to the inn, where every thing was prepared for our reception. My wife and I led the van, and left those gloomy mansions of sorrow. The generous Baronet ordered forty pounds to be distributed among the prisoners; and Mr. Wilmot, induced by his example, gave half that sum. We were received below by the shouts of the villagers, and I saw and shook by the hand two or three of my honest parishioners who were among the number. They attended us to our inn, where a sumptuous entertainment was provided, and coarser provisions were distributed in great quantities among the populace.

After supper, as my spirits were exhausted by the alternation of pleasure and pain which they had sustained during the day, I asked permission to withdraw; and leaving the company in the midst of their mirth, as soon as I found myself alone I poured out my heart in gratitude to the Giver of joy as well as of sorrow, and then slept undisturbed till morning.

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CHAP. XXXII.

The Conclusion.

THE next morning as soon as I awaked I found my eldest son sitting by my bed-side, who came to increase my joy with another turn of fortune in my favour. First having released me from the settlement that I had made the day before in his favour, he let me know that my merchant who had failed in town was arrested at Antwerp, and there had given up effects to a much greater amount than what was due to his creditors. My boy's generosity pleased me almost as much as this unlooked-for good fortune. But I had some doubts whether I ought in justice to accept his offer. While I was pondering upon this, Sir William entered the room, to whom I communicated my doubts. His opinion was, that as my son was already possessed of a very affluent fortune by his marriage, I might accept his offer without any hesitation. His business, however, was to inform me, that as he had the night before sent for the licences, and expected them every hour, he hoped that I would not refuse my assistance in making all the company happy that morning. A footman entered while we were speaking, to tell us that the messenger was returned, and, as I was by this time ready, I went down, where I found the whole company as merry as affluence and innocence could make them. However, as they were now preparing for a very solemn ceremony, their laughter entirely displeased me. I told them of the grave, becoming, and sublime deportment they should assume upon this mystical occasion, and read them two homilies and a thesis of my own

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composing, in order to prepare them. Yet they still seemed perfectly refractory and ungovernable. Even as we were going along to church, to which I led the way, all gravity had quite forsaken them, and I was often tempted to turn back in indignation. In church a new dilemma arose, which promised no easy solution. This was, which couple should be married first; my son's bride warmly insisted that Lady Thornhill (that was to be) should take the lead; but this the other refused with equal ardour, protesting she would not be guilty of such rudeness for the world. The argument was supported for some time between both with equal obstinacy and good breeding. But as I stood all this time with my book ready, I was at last quite tired of the contest, and shutting it, "I perceive," cried I, "that none of you have a mind to "be married, and I think we had as good go back "again; for I suppose there will be no business done "here to-day."——This at once reduced them to reason. The Baronet and his lady were first married, and then my son and his lovely partner.

I had previously that morning given orders that a coach should be sent for my honest neighbour Flamborough and his family, by which means, upon our return to the inn, we had the pleasure of finding the two Miss Flamboroughs alighted before us. Mr. Jenkinson gave his hand to the eldest, and my son Moses led up the other; (and I have since found that he has taken a real liking to the girl, and my consent and bounty he shall have, whenever he thinks proper to demand them.) We were no sooner returned to the inn, but numbers of my parishioners, hearing of my success, came to congratulate me; but among the rest were those who rose to rescue me, and whom I formerly rebuked with such sharpness. I told the story to Sir William, my son-in-law, who went out and reproved them with great severity; but finding them quite disheartened by his harsh reproof,

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he gave them half a guinea apiece to drink his health and raise their dejected spirits.

Soon after this we were called to a very genteel entertainment, which was dressed by Mr. Thornhill's cook. And it may not be improper to observe with respect to that gentleman, that he now resides in quality of companion at a relation's house, being very well liked, and seldom sitting at the side-table, except when there is no room at the other; for they make no stranger of him. His time is pretty much taken up in keeping his relation, who is a little melancholy, in spirits, and in learning to blow the French-horn. My eldest daughter, however, still remembers him with regret; and she has even told me, though I make a great secret of it, that when he reforms she may be brought to relent. But to return, for I am not apt to digress thus, when we were to sit down to dinner our ceremonies were going to be renewed. The question was, whether my eldest daughter, as being a matron, should not sit above the two young brides; but the debate was cut short by my son George, who proposed that the company should sit indiscriminately, every gentleman by his lady. This was received with great approbation by all, excepting my wife, who I could perceive was not perfectly satisfied, as she expected to have had the pleasure of sitting at the head of the table and carving all the meat for all the company. But notwithstanding this, it is impossible to describe our good humour. I can't say whether we had more wit among us now than usual; but I am certain we had more laughing, which answered the end as well. One jest I particularly remember: old Mr. Wilmot drinking to Moses, whose head was turned another way, my son replied, "Madam, I thank you." Upon which the old gentleman, winking upon the rest of the company, observed that he was thinking of his mistress. At which jest I thought the two Miss

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Flamboroughs would have died with laughing. As soon as dinner was over, according to my old custom, I requested that the table might be taken away, to have the pleasure of seeing all my family assembled once more by a cheerful fire-side. My two little ones sate upon each knee, the rest of the company by their partners. I had nothing now on this side of the grave to wish for; all my cares were over, my pleasure was unspeakable. It now only remained that my gratitude in good fortune should exceed my former submission in adversity.

END OF THE VICAR OF WAKEFIELD.

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AN ENQUIRY

INTO THE

PRESENT STATE

OF

POLITE LEARNING.

Εμοι προς φιλοσοφους εστι φιλια· προς μεν τοι σοφιστας η γραμματιστας· ουτε νυν εστι φιλια μητε υστερον ποτε γενοιτο.

Tolerabile si Ædificia nostra diruerent Ædificandi capaces.

THE FIRST EDITION OF THIS WORK APPEARED IN 1759, AND THE SECOND WAS PRINTED IN 1774.

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AN ENQUIRY

INTO THE

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OF

POLITE LEARNING.

CHAP. I.

Introduction.

It has been so long the practice to represent literature as declining, that every renewal of this complaint now comes with diminished influence. The public has been so often excited by a false alarm, that at present the nearer we approach the threatened period of decay, the more our security increases.

It will now probably be said that taking the decay of genius for granted, as I do, argues either resentment or partiality. The writer possessed of fame, it may be asserted, is willing to enjoy it without a rival, by lessening every competitor; or, if unsuccessful, he is desirous to turn upon others the contempt which is levelled at himself, and being convicted at the bar of literary justice, hopes for pardon by accusing every brother of the same profession.

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Sensible of this, I am at a loss where to find an apology for persisting to arraign the merit of the age; for joining in a cry which the judicious have long since left to be kept up by the vulgar, and for adopting the sentiments of the multitude in a performance that at best can please only a few.

Complaints of our degeneracy in literature as well as in morals, I own, have been frequently exhibited of late; but seem to be enforced more with the ardour of devious declamation, than the calmness of deliberate enquiry. The dullest critic, who strives at a reputation for delicacy, by shewing he cannot be pleased, may pathetically assure us that our taste is upon the decline, may consign every modern performance to oblivion, and bequeath nothing to posterity except the labours of our ancestors, or his own. Such general invective, however, conveys no instruction: all it teaches is, that the writer dislikes an age by which he is probably disregarded. The manner of being useful on the subject would be, to point out the symptoms, to investigate the causes, and direct to the remedies of the approaching decay. This is a subject hitherto unattempted in criticism; perhaps it is the only subject in which criticism can be useful.

How far the writer is equal to such an undertaking the reader must determine; yet, perhaps, his observations may be just, though his manner of expressing them should only serve as an example of the errors he undertakes to reprove.

Novelty, however, is not permitted to usurp the place of reason; it may attend, but shall not conduct the enquiry. But it should be observed that the more original any performance is, the more it is liable to deviate; for cautious stupidity is always in the right.

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CHAP. II.

The Causes which contribute to the Decline of Learning.

If we consider the revolutions which have happened in the commonwealth of letters, survey the rapid progress of learning in one period of antiquity, or its amazing decline in another, we shall be almost induced to accuse nature of partiality, as if she had exhausted all her efforts in adorning one age, while she left the succeeding entirely neglected. It is not to nature, however, but to ourselves alone, that this partiality must be ascribed; the seeds of excellence are sown in every age, and it is wholly owing to a wrong direction in the passions or pursuits of mankind, that they have not received the proper cultivation.

As in the best regulated societies, the very laws which at first give the government solidity, may in the end contribute to its dissolution, so the efforts which might have promoted learning in its feeble commencement, may, if continued, retard its progress. The paths of science, which were at first intricate because untrodden, may at last grow toilsome because too much frequented. As learning advances, the candidates for its honours become more numerous, and the acquisition of fame more uncertain; the modest may despair of attaining it, and the opulent think it too precarious to pursue; thus the task of supporting the honour of the times may at last devolve on indigence and effrontery, while learning must partake of the contempt of its professors.

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To illustrate these assertions it may be proper to take a slight review of the decline of ancient learning; to consider how far its depravation was owing to the impossibility of supporting continued perfection; in what respects it proceeded from voluntary corruption; and how far it was hastened on by accident. If Modern learning be compared with Ancient in these different lights, a parallel between both, which has hitherto produced only vain dispute, may contribute to amusement, perhaps to instruction. We shall thus be enabled to perceive what period of antiquity the present age most resembles, whether we are making advances towards excellence, or retiring again to primeval obscurity; we shall thus be taught to acquiesce in those defects which it is impossible to prevent; and reject all faulty innovations, though offered under the specious titles of improvement.

Learning, when planted in any country, is transient and fading, nor does it flourish till slow gradations of improvement have naturalized it to the soil. It makes feeble advances, begins among the vulgar, and rises into reputation among the great. It cannot be established in a state at once, by introducing the learned of other countries; these may grace a court, but seldom enlighten a kingdom. Ptolemy Philadelphus, Constantine Porphyrogeneta, Alfred, or Charlemagne, might have invited learned foreigners into their dominions, but could not establish learning. While in the radiance of royal favour, every art and science seemed to flonrish; but when that was withdrawn, they quickly felt the rigours of a strange climate, and with exotic constitutions perished by neglect.

As the arts and sciences are slow in coming to maturity, it is requisite, in order to their perfection, that the state should be permanent which gives

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them reception. There are numberless attempts without success, and experiments without conclusion, between the first rudiments of an art, and its utmost perfection; between the outlines of a shadow, and the picture of an Apelles. Leisure is required to go through the tedious interval, to join the experience of predecessors to our own, or enlarge our views, by building on the ruined attempts of former adventurers. All this may be performed in a society of long continuance; bnt if the kingdom be but of short duration, as was the case of Arabia, learning seems coeval, sympathizes with its political struggles, and is annihilated in its dissolution.

But permanence in a state is not alone sufficient; it is requisite also for this end that it should be free. Naturalists assure us, that all animals are sagacious in proportion as they are removed from the tyranny of others: in native liberty, the elephant is a citizen, and the beaver an architect; but whenever the tyrant man intrudes upon their community, their spirit is broken, they seem anxious only for safety, and their intellects suffer an equal diminution with their prosperity. The parallel will hold with regard to mankind: fear naturally represses invention; benevolence, ambition; for in a nation of slaves, as in the despotic governments of the East, to labour after fame is to be a candidate for danger.

To attain literary excellence also, it is requisite that the soil and climate should, as much as possible, conduce to happiness. The earth must supply man with the necessaries of life, before he has leisure, or inclination, to pursue more refined enjoyments. The climate also must be equally indulgent, for, in too warm a region, the mind is relaxed into languor, and by the opposite excess, is chilled into torpid inactivity.

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These are the principal advantages which tend to the improvement of learning, and all these were united in the states of Greece and Rome.

We must now examine what hastens, or prevents its decline.

Those who behold the phænomena of nature, and content themselves with the view without enquiring into their causes, are perhaps wiser than is generally imagined. In this manner our rude ancestors were acquainted with facts; and Poetry, which helped the imagination and the memory, was thought the most proper vehicle for conveying their knowledge to posterity. It was the poet who harmonized the ungrateful accents of his native dialect, who lifted it above common conversation, and shaped its rude combinations into order. From him the orator formed a style, and though poetry first rose out of prose, in turn it gave birth to every prosaic excellence. Musical period, concise expression, and delicacy of sentiment, were all excellencies derived from the poet; in short, he not only preceded, but formed the orator, philosopher, and historian.

When the observations of past ages were collected, philosophy next began to examine their causes. She had numberless facts from which to draw proper inferences, and poetry had taught her the strongest expression to enforce them. Thus the Greek philosophers, for instance, exerted all their happy talents in the investigation of truth, and the production of beauty. They saw, that there was more excellence in captivating the judgment, than in raising a momentary astonishment: in their arts they imitated only such parts of nature, as might please in the representation; in the sciences, they cultivated such parts of knowledge, as it was every man's duty to know. Thus learning was encouraged, protected, honoured; and in its

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turn it adorned, strengthened, and harmonized the community.

But as the mind is vigorous and active, and experiment is dilatory and painful, the spirit of philosophy being excited, the reasoner, when destitute of experiment, had recourse to theory, and gave up what was useful for refinement.

Critics, sophists, grammarians, rhetoricians, and commentators, now began to figure in the literary commonwealth. In the dawn of science such are generally modest, and not entirely useless; their performances serve to mark the progress of learning, though they seldom contribute to its improvement. But as nothing but speculation was required in making proficients, in their respective departments; so neither the satire nor the contempt of the wise, though Socrates was of the number, nor the laws levelled at them by the state, though Cato was in the legislature, could prevent their approaches*. Possessed of all the advantages of unfeeling dulness, laborious, insensible, and persevering, they still proceeded mending and mending every work of genius, or, to speak without irony, undermining all that was polite and useful. Libraries were loaded, but not enriched with their labours, while the fatigue of reading their explanatory comments was tenfold that which might suffice for understanding the original, and their works effectually increased our application, by professing to remove it.

Against so obstinate and irrefragable an enemy, what could avail the unsupported sallies of genius, or the opposition of transitory resentment? In short, they conquered by persevering, claimed the right of dictating upon every work of taste, sentiment, or genius, and at last, when destitute of other employment,

* Vide Sueton. Hist. Gram.

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like the supernumerary domestics of the great, made work for each other.

They now took upon them to teach poetry to those who wanted genius; and the power of disputing, to those who knew nothing of the subject in debate. It was observed, how some of the most admired poets had copied nature. From these they collected dry rules, dignified with long names, and such were obtruded upon the public for their improvement. Common sense would be apt to suggest, that the art might be studied to more advantage, rather by imitation than precept. It might suggest that those rules were collected, not from nature, but a copy of nature, and would consequently give us still fainter resemblances of original beauty. It might still suggest that explained wit makes but a feeble impression, that the observations of others are soon forgotten, those made by ourselves are permanent and useful. But, it seems, understandings of every size were to be mechanically instructed in poetry. If the reader was too dull to relish the beauties of Virgil, the comment of Servius was ready to brighten his imagination; if Terence could not raise him to a smile, Evantius was at hand, with a long-winded scholium to increase his titillation. Such rules are calculated to make blockheads talk; but all the lemmata of the Lyceum are unable to give him feeling.

But it would be endless to recount all the absurdities which were hatched in the schools of those specious idlers; be it sufficient to say, that they increased as learning improved, but swarmed on its decline. It was then that every work of taste was buried in long comments, every useful subject in morals was distinguished away into casuistry, and doubt and subtilty characterised the learning of the age. Metrodorus, Valerius Probus, Aulus Gellius, Pedianus, Boethius, and an hundred others, to be acquainted

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with whom might shew much reading, and but little judgment; these, I say, made choice each of an author, and delivered all their load of learning on his back;—shame to our ancestors! many of their works have reached our times entire, while Tacitus himself has suffered mutilation.

In a word, the commonwealth of literature was at last wholly overrun by these studious triflers. Men of real genius were lost in the multitude, or, as in a world of fools it were folly to aim at being an only exception, obliged to conform to every prevailing absurdity of the times. Original productions seldom appeared, and learning, as if grown superannuated, bestowed all its panegyric upon the vigour of its youth, and turned encomiast upon its former atchievements.

It is to these then that the depravation of ancient polite learning is principally to be ascribed. By them it was separated from common sense, and made the proper employment of speculative idlers. Men bred up among books, and seeing nature only by reflection, could do little except hunt after perplexity and confusion. The public, therefore, with reason rejected learning, when thus rendered barren, though voluminous; for we may be assured, that the generality of mankind never lose a passion for letters, while they continue to be either amusing or useful.

It was such writers as these, that rendered learning unfit for uniting and strengthening civil society, or for promoting the views of ambition. True philosophy had kept the Grecian states cemented into one effective body, more than any law for that purpose; and the Etrurian philosophy, which prevailed in the first ages of Rome, inspired those patriot virtues which paved the way to universal empire. But by the labours of commentators, when philosophy became abstruse, or triflingly minute, when doubt was presented instead of knowledge, when the orator

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was taught to charm the multitude with the music of his periods, and pronounced a declamation that might be sung as well as spoken, and often upon subjects wholly fictitious; in such circumstances, learning was entirely unsuited to all the purposes of government, or the designs of the ambitious. As long as the sciences could influence the state, and its politics were strengthened by them, so long did the community give them countenance and protection. But the wiser part of mankind would not be imposed upon by unintelligible jargon, nor, like the knight in Pantagruel, swallow a chimera for a breakfast, though even cooked by Aristotle. As the philosopher grew useless in the state, he also became contemptible. In the times of Lucian he was chiefly remarkable for his avarice, his impudence, and his beard.

Under the auspicious influence of genius, arts and sciences grew up together, and mutually illustrated each other. But when once pedants became lawgivers, the sciences began to want grace, and the polite arts solidity; these grew crabbed and sour, those meretricious and gaudy; the philosopher became disgustingly precise, and the poet, ever straining after grace, caught only finery.

These men also contributed to obstruct the progress of wisdom, by addicting their readers to one particular sect, or some favourite science. They generally carried on a petty traffic in some little creek; within that they busily plied about, and drove an insignificant trade; but never ventured out into the great ocean of knowledge, nor went beyond the bounds that chance, conceit, or laziness, had first prescribed their enquiries. Their disciples, instead of aiming at being originals themselves, became imitators of that merit alone which was constantly proposed for their admiration. In exercises of this kind, the most stupid are generally most successful; for there

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is not in nature a more imitative animal than a dunce.

Hence ancient learning may be distinguished into three periods. Its commencement, or the age of poets; its maturity, or the age of philosophers; and its decline, or the age of critics. In the poetical age commentators were very few, but might have in some respects been useful. In its philosophical, their assistance must necessarily become obnoxious, yet, as if the nearer we approached perfection, the more we stood in need of their directions, in this period they began to grow numerous. But when polite learning was no more, then it was those literary lawgivers made the most formidable appearance. *Corruptissima republica, plurimæ leges.* TACIT.

But let us take a more distinct view of those ages of ignorance, in which false refinement had involved mankind, and see how far they resemble our own.

CHAP. III.

A view of the Obscure Ages.

WHATEVER the skill of any country may be in the sciences, it is from its excellence in polite learning alone that it must expect a character from posterity. The poet and the historian are they who diffuse a lustre upon the age, and the philosopher scarcely acquires any applause, unless his character be introduced to the vulgar by their mediation.

The obscure ages, which succeeded the decline of the Roman empire, are a striking instance of the truth of this assertion. Whatever period of those

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ill-fated times we happen to turn to, we shall perceive more skill in the sciences among the professors of them, more abstruse and deeper enquiry into every philosophical subject, and a greater shew of subtilty and close reasoning, than in the most enlightened ages of all antiquity. But their writings were mere speculative amusements, and all their researches exhausted upon trifles. Unskilled in the arts of adorning their knowledge, or adapting it to common sense, their voluminous productions rest peacefully in our libraries, or at best are enquired after from motives of curiosity, not by the scholar, but the virtuoso.

I am not insensible that several late French historians have exhibited the obscure ages in a very different light; they have represented them as utterly ignorant both of arts and sciences, buried in the profoundest darkness, or only illuminated with a feeble gleam, which like an expiring taper, rose and sunk by intervals. Such assertions, however, though they serve to help out the declaimer, should be cautiously admitted by the historian. For instance, the tenth century is particularly distinguished by posterity with the appellation of obscure. Yet even in this the reader's memory may possibly suggest the names of some, whose works, still preserved, discover a most extensive erudition, though rendered almost useless by affectation and obscurity. A few of their names and writings may be mentioned, which will serve at once to confirm what I assert, and give the reader an idea of what kind of learning an age declining into obscurity chiefly chooses to cultivate.

About the tenth century flourished Leo the philosopher. We have seven volumes folio of his collections of laws, published at Paris, 1647. He wrote upon the art military, and understood also astronomy and judicial astrology. He was seven times more voluminous than Plato.

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Solomon the German wrote a most elegant dictionary of the Latin tongue, still preserved in the university of Louvain; Pantaleon, in the lives of his illustrious countrymen, speaks of it in the warmest strains of rapture. Dictionary writing was at that time much in fashion.

Constantine Porphyrogeneta was a man universally skilled in the sciences. His tracts on the administration of an empire, on tactics, and on laws, were published some years since at Leyden. His court, for he was emperor of the East, was resorted to by the learned from all parts of the world.

Liutprandus was a most voluminous historian, and particularly famous for the history of his own times. The compliments paid him as a writer, are said to exceed even his own voluminous productions. I cannot pass over one of a latter date made him by a German divine. *Liutprandus nunquam Liutprando dissimilis.*

Alfric composed several grammars and dictionaries still preserved among the curious.

Pope Sylvester the second wrote a treatise on the sphere, on arithmetic and geometry, published some years since at Paris.

Michael Psellus lived in this age, whose books in the sciences, I will not scruple to assert, contain more learning than those of any one of the earlier ages; his erudition was indeed amazing, and he was as voluminous as he was learned. The character given him by Allatius has, perhaps, more truth in it than will be granted by those who have seen none of his productions. There was, says he, no science with which he was unacquainted, none which he did not write something upon, and none which he did not leave better than he found it. To mention his works would be endless. His commentaries on Aristotle alone amount to three folios.

Bertholdus Teutonicus, a very voluminous historian, was a politician, and wrote against the govern-

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ment under which he lived: but most of his writings, though not all, are lost.

Constantius Afer was a philosopher and physician. We have remaining but two volumes folio of his philological performances. However, the historian who prefixes the life of the author to his works, says, that he wrote many more, as he kept on writing during the course of a long life.

Lambertus published an universal history about this time, which has been printed at Frankfort in folio. An universal history in one folio! If he had consulted with his bookseller, he would have spun it out to ten at least; but Lambertus might have had too much modesty.

By this time the reader perceives the spirit of learning which at that time prevailed. The ignorance of the age was not owing to a dislike of knowledge; but a false standard of taste was erected, and a wrong direction given to philosophical enquiry. It was the fashion of the day to write dictionaries, commentaries, and compilations, and to evaporate in a folio the spirit that could scarcely have sufficed for an epigram. The most barbarous times had men of learning, if commentators, compilers, polemic divines, and intricate metaphysicians, deserved the title.

I have mentioned but a very inconsiderable number of the writers in this age of obscurity. The multiplicity of their publications will at least equal those of any similar period of the most polite antiquity. As, therefore, the writers of those times are almost entirely forgotten, we may infer, that the number of publications alone will never secure any age whatsoever from oblivion. Nor can printing, contrary to what Mr. Baumelle has remarked, prevent literary decline for the future, since it only increases the number of books, without advancing their intrinsic merit.

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CHAP. IV.

Of the present state of Polite Learning in Italy.

FROM ancient we are now come to modern times, and in running over Europe, we shall find that, wherever learning has been cultivated, it has flourished by the same advantages as in Greece and Rome; and that, wherever it has declined, it sinks by the same causes of decay.

Dante, the poet of Italy, who wrote in the 13th century, was the first who attempted to bring learning from the cloister into the community, and paint human nature in a language adapted to modern manners. He addressed a barbarous people in a method suited to their apprehensions; united purgatory and the river Styx, St. Peter and Virgil, heaven and hell together, and shews a strange mixture of good sense and absurdity. The truth is, he owes most of his reputation to the obscurity of the times in which he lived. As in the land of Benin a man may pass for a prodigy of parts who can read, so in an age of barbarity a small degree of excellence ensures success. But it was great merit in him to have lifted up the standard of nature, in spite of all the opposition and the persecution he received from contemporary criticism. To this standard every succeeding genius resorted; the germ of every art and science began to unfold, and to imitate nature was found to be the surest way of imitating antiquity. In a century or two after modern Italy might justly boast of rivalling ancient Rome; equal

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in some branches of polite learning, and not far surpassed in others.

They soon however fell from emulating the wonders of antiquity into simple admiration. As if the word had been given when Vida and Tasso wrote on the arts of poetry, the whole swarm of critics was up; the Speroni's of the age attempted to be awkwardly merry; and the Virtuosi and the Nascotti sat upon the merits of every contemporary performance. After the age of Clement VII. the Italians seemed to think that there was more merit in praising or censuring well, than in writing well; almost every subsequent performance since their time being designed rather to shew the excellence of the critic's taste than his genius. One or two poets, indeed, seem at present born to redeem the honour of their country. Metastasio has restored nature in all her simplicity. And Maffei is the first that has introduced a tragedy among his countrymen without a love-plot. Perhaps the Samson of Milton, and the Athalia of Racine, might have been his guides in such an attempt. But two poets in an age are not sufficient to revive the splendour of decaying genius; nor should we consider them as the standard by which to characterise a nation. Our measures of literary reputation must be taken rather from that numerous class of men who, placed above the vulgar, are yet beneath the great, and who confer fame on others without receiving any portion of it themselves.

In Italy, then, we shall no where find a stronger passion for the arts of taste, yet no country making more feeble efforts to promote either. The Virtuosi and Filosofi seem to have divided the Encyclopedia between each other. Both inviolably attached to their respective pursuits, and from an opposition of character, each holding the other in the most sovereign contempt. The Virtuosi, professed

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critics of beauty in the works of art, judge of medals by the smell, and pictures by feeling. In statuary hang over a fragment with the most ardent gaze of admiration: though wanting the head and the other extremities, if dug from a ruin the *Torse* becomes inestimable. An unintelligible monument of Etruscan barbarity cannot be sufficiently prized: and any thing from Herculaneum excites rapture. When the intellectual taste is thus decayed, its relishes become false, and like that of sense, nothing will satisfy but what is best suited to feed the disease.

Poetry is no longer among them an imitation of what we see, but of what a visionary might wish. The zephyr breathes the most exquisite perfume, the trees wear eternal verdure; fawns and dryads and hamadryads stand ready to fan the sultry shepherdess, who has forgot indeed the prettinesses with which Guarini's shepherdesses have been reproached, but is so simple and innocent as often to have no meaning. Happy country, where the pastoral age begins to revive! Where the wits even of Rome are united into a rural groupe of nymphs and swains under the appellation of modern Arcadians. Where, in the midst of porticos, processions, and cavalcades, abbés turned shepherds, and shepherdesses without sheep indulge their innocent *divertimenti*.

The Filosofi are entirely different from the former. As those pretend to have got their knowledge from conversing with the living and polite, so these boast of having theirs from books and study. Bred up all their lives in colleges, they have there learned to think in track, servilely to follow the leader of their sect, and only to adopt such opinions as their universities, or the inquisition, are pleased to allow. By these means they are behind the rest of Europe in several modern improvements. Afraid to

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think for themselves; and their universities seldom admit opinions as true, till universally received among the rest of mankind. In short, were I to personize my ideas of learning in this country, I would represent it in the tawdry habits of the stage or else in the more homely guise of bearded school-philosophy.

CHAP. V.

Of Polite Learning in Germany.

If we examine the state of learning in Germany, we shall find that the Germans early discovered a passion for polite literature; but unhappily, like conquerors, who, invading the dominions of others, leave their own to desolation, instead of studying the German tongue they continue to write in Latin; thus, while they cultivated an obsolete language, and vainly laboured to apply it to modern manners, they neglected their own.

At the same time also they began at the wrong end, I mean by being commentators, and though they have given many instances of their industry, they have scarcely afforded any of genius. If criticism could have improved the taste of a people, the Germans would have been the most polite nation alive. We shall no where behold the learned wear a more important appearance than here; no where more dignified with professorships, or dressed out in the fopperies of scholastic finery. However, they seem to earn all the honours of this kind which they

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enjoy. Their assiduity is unparalleled; and did they employ half those hours on study which they bestow on reading, we might be induced to pity as well as praise their painful pre-eminence. But guilty of a fault too common to great readers, they write through volumes, while they do not think through a page. Never fatigued themselves, they think the reader can never be weary; so they drone on, saying all that can be said on the subject, not selecting what may be advanced to the purpose. Were angels to write books, they never would write folios.

But let the Germans have their due; if they are dull, no nation alive assumes a more laudable solemnity, or better understands all the decorums of stupidity. Let the discourse of a professor run on never so heavily, it cannot be irksome to his dosing pupils, who frequently lend him sympathetic nods of approbation. I have sometimes attended their disputes at gradation. On this occasion they often dispense with their gravity, and seem really all alive. The disputes are managed between the followers of Cartesius, whose exploded system they continue to call the new philosophy, and those of Aristotle. Though both parties are in the wrong, they argue with an obstinacy worthy the cause of truth; Nego, Probo, and Distinguo, grow loud; the disputants become warm, the moderator cannot be heard, the audience take part in the debate, till at last the whole hall buzzes with sophistry and error.

There are, it is true, several societies in this country which are chiefly calculated to promote knowledge. His late Majesty, as elector of Hanover, has established one at Gottingen, at an expense of not less than a hundred thousand pounds. This university has already pickled monsters, and dissected live puppies without number. Their transactions

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have been published in the learned world at proper intervals since their institution; and will, it is hoped, one day give them just reputation. But had the fourth part of the immense sum above-mentioned been given in proper rewards to genius, in some neighbouring countries, it would have rendered the name of the donor immortal, and added to the real interests of society.

Yet it ought to be observed, that of late learning has been patronised here by a prince, who, in the humblest station, would have been the first of mankind. The society established by the king of Prussia at Berlin, is one of the finest literary institutions that any age or nation has produced. This academy comprehends all the sciences under four different classes; and although the object of each is different, and admits of being separately treated, yet these classes mutually influence the progress of each other, and concur in the same general design. Experimental philosophy, mathematics, metaphysics, and polite literature, are here carried on together. The members are not collected from among the students of some obscure seminary, or the wits of a metropolis, but chosen from all the literati of Europe, supported by the bounty, and ornamented by the productions, of their royal founder. We can easily discern how much such an institution excels any other now subsisting. One fundamental error among societies of this kind is, their addicting themselves to one branch of science, or some particular part of polite learning. Thus, in Germany, there are no where so many establishments of this nature; but as they generally profess the promotion of natural or medical knowledge, he who reads their Acta will only find an obscure farrago of experiments, most frequently terminated by no resulting phænomena. To make experiments

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is, I own, the only way to promote natural knowledge; but to treasure up every unsuccessful enquiry into nature, or to communicate every experiment without conclusion, is not to promote science, but oppress it. Had the members of these societies enlarged their plans, and taken in art as well as science, one part of knowledge would have repressed any faulty luxuriance in the other, and all would have mutually assisted each other's promotion. Besides, the society which, with a contempt of all collateral assistance, admits of members skilled in one science only, whatever their diligence or labour may be, will lose much time in the discovery of such truths as are well known already to the learned in a different line; consequently their progress must be slow in gaining a proper eminence from which to view their subject, and their strength will be exhausted in attaining the station whence they should have set out. With regard to the Royal Society of London, the greatest, and perhaps the oldest institution of the kind, had it widened the basis of its institution, though they might not have propagated more discoveries, they would probably have delivered them in a more pleasing and compendious form. They would have been free from the contempt of the ill-natured, and the raillery of the wit, for which, even candour must allow, there is but too much foundation. But the Berlin academy is subject to none of all these inconveniences, but every one of its individuals is in a capacity of deriving more from the common stock than he contributes to it, while each academician serves as a check upon the rest of his fellows.

Yet, very probably, even this fine institution will soon decay. As it rose, so it will decline with its great encourager. The society, if I may so speak, is artificially supported, the introduction of foreigners of learning was right; but in adopting a foreign

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language also, I mean the French, in which all the transactions are to be published, and questions debated: in this there was an error. As I have already hinted, the language of the natives of every country should be also the language of its polite learning. To figure in polite learning, every country should make their own language from their own manners; nor will they ever succeed by introducing that of another, which has been formed from manners which are different. Besides, an academy composed of foreigners must still be recruited from abroad, unless all the natives of the country to which it belongs, are in a capacity of becoming candidates for its honours, or rewards. While France therefore continues to supply Berlin, polite learning will flourish; but when royal favour is withdrawn, learning will return to its natural country.

CHAP. VI.

Of Polite Learning in Holland and some other countries of Europe.

HOLLAND, at first view, appears to have some pretensions to polite learning. It may be regarded as the great emporium, not less of literature than of every other commodity. Here, though destitute of what may be properly called a language of their own, all the languages are understood, cultivated and spoken. All useful inventions in arts, and new discoveries in science, are published here almost as soon as at the places which first produced

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them. Its individuals have the same faults, however, with the Germans, of making more use of their memory than their judgment. The chief employment of their literati is to criticise, or answer, the new performances which appear elsewhere.

A dearth of wit in France or England naturally produces a scarcity in Holland. What Ovid says of Echo, may be applied here, *Nec loqui prius ipsa didicit nec reticere loquenti.* They wait till something new comes out from others; examine its merits, and reject it, or make it reverberate through the rest of Europe.

After all, I know not whether they should be allowed any national character for polite learning. All their taste is derived to them from neighbouring nations, and that in a language not their own. They somewhat resemble their brokers, who trade for immense sums without having any capital.

The other countries of Europe may be considered as immersed in ignorance, or making but feeble efforts to rise. Spain has long fallen from amazing Europe with her wit, to amusing them with the greatness of her catholic credulity. Rome considers her as the most favourite of all her children, and school-divinity still reigns there in triumph. In spite of all attempts of the Marquis D'Ensanada, who saw with regret the barbarity of his countrymen, and bravely offered to oppose it by introducing new systems of learning, and suppressing the seminaries of monastic ignorance, in spite of the ingenuity of Padré Feio, whose book of vulgar errors so finely exposes the monkish stupidity of the times, the religious have prevailed. Ensanada has been banished, and now lives in exile. Feio has incurred the hatred and contempt of every bigot whose errors he has attempted to oppose, and feels no doubt the unremitting displeasure of the priesthood. Per-

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secution is a tribute the Great must ever pay for pre-eminence.

It is a little extraordinary, however, how Spain, whose genius is naturally fine, should be so much behind the rest of Europe in this particular; or why school-divinity should hold its ground there for nearly six hundred years. The reason must be, that philosophical opinions, which are otherwise transient, acquire stability in proportion as they are connected with the laws of the country, and philosophy and law have no where been so closely united as here.

Sweden has of late made some attempts in polite learning in its own language. Count Tessin's instructions to the prince, his pupil, are no bad beginning. If the Muses can fix their residence so far northward, perhaps no country bids so fair for their reception. They have, I am told, a language rude but energetic; if so, it will bear a polish; they have also a jealous sense of liberty, and that strength of thinking peculiar to northern climates, without its attendant ferocity. They will certainly in time produce somewhat great if their intestine divisions do not unhappily prevent them.

The history of polite learning in Denmark may be comprised in the life of one single man; it rose and fell with the late famous Baron Holberg. This was, perhaps, one of the most extraordinary personages that has done honour to the present century. His being the son of a private sentinel did not abate the ardour of his ambition; for he learned to read, though without a master. Upon the death of his father, being left entirely destitute, he was involved in all that distress which is common among the poor, and of which the great have scarcely any idea. However, though only a boy of nine years old, he still persisted in pursuing his studies, travelled about from school to school, and begged his

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learning and his bread. When at the age of seventeen, instead of applying himself to any of the lower occupations, which seem best adapted to such circumstances, he was resolved to travel for improvement from Norway, the place of his birth, to Copenhagen, the capital city of Denmark. He lived there by teaching French, at the same time avoiding no opportunity of improvement, that his scanty funds could permit. But his ambition was not to be restrained, or his thirst of knowledge satisfied until he had seen the world. Without money, recommendations or friends, he undertook to set out upon his travels, and make the tour of Europe on foot. A good voice and a trifling skill in music were the only finances he had to support an undertaking so extensive; so he travelled by day, and at night sung at the doors of peasants' houses to get himself a lodging. In this manner, while yet very young, Holberg passed through France, Germany, and Holland, and coming over to England, took up his residence for two years in the university of Oxford. Here he subsisted by teaching French and music, and wrote his universal history, his earliest, but worst performance. Furnished with all the learning of Europe, he at last thought proper to return to Copenhagen, where his ingenious productions quickly gained him that favour he deserved. He composed not less than eighteen comedies; those in his own language are said to excel, and those which are translated into French have peculiar merit. He was honoured with nobility, and enriched by the bounty of the king; so that a life begun in contempt and penury ended in opulence and esteem.

Thus we see in what a low state polite learning is in the countries I have mentioned, either past its prime, or not yet arrived at maturity. And though the sketch I have drawn be general, yet it was for

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the most part taken upon the spot. I am sensible, however, of the impropriety of national reflection; and did not truth bias me more than inclination in this particular, I should, instead of the account already given, have presented the reader with a panegyric on many of the individuals of every country, whose merits deserve the warmest strains of praise. Apostolo Zeno, Algarotti, Goldoni, Muratori, and Stay, in Italy; Haller, Klopstock, and Rabner, in Germany; Muschenbroek, and Gaubius, in Holland; all deserve the highest applause. Men like these, united by one bond, pursuing one design, spend their labour and their lives in making their fellow-creatures happy, and in repairing the breaches caused by ambition. In this light the meanest philosopher, though all his possessions are his lamp or his cell, is more truly valuable than he whose name echoes to the shout of the million, and who stands in all the glare of admiration. In this light, though poverty and contemptuous neglect are all the wages of his good will from mankind, yet the rectitude of his intention is an ample recompense; and self-applause for the present, and the alluring prospect of fame for futurity, reward his labours. The perspective of life brightens upon us, when terminated by an object so charming. Every intermediate image of want, banishment, or sorrow, receives a lustre from its distant influence. With this in view, the patriot, philosopher, and poet, have often looked with calmness on disgrace and famine, and rested on their straw with cheerful serenity. Even the last terrors of departing nature abate of their severity, and look kindly on him who considers his sufferings as a passport to immortality, and lays his sorrows on the bed of fame.

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CHAP. VII.

Of Polite Learning in France.

We have hitherto seen, that wherever the poet was permitted to begin by improving his native language, polite learning flourished; but where the critic undertook the same task, it has never risen to any degree of perfection. Let us now examine the merits of modern learning in France and England; where, though it may be on the decline, yet it is still capable of retrieving much of its former splendour. In other places learning has not yet been planted, or has suffered a total decay. To attempt amendment there would be only like the application of remedies to an insensible or a mortified part; but here there is still life, and there is hope. And indeed the French themselves are so far from giving into any despondence of this kind, that on the contrary they admire the progress they are daily making in every science; that levity, for which we are apt to despise this nation, is probably the principal source of their happiness. An agreeable oblivion of past pleasures, a freedom from solicitude about future ones, and a poignant zest of every present enjoyment, if they be not philosophy, are at least excellent substitutes. By this they are taught to regard the period in which they live with admiration. The present manners and the present conversation surpass all that preceded. A similar enthusiasm as strongly tinctures their learning and their taste. While we, with a despondence cha-

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racteristic of our nation, are for removing back British excellence to the reign of queen Elizabeth, our more happy rivals of the continent cry up the writers of the present times with rapture, and regard the age of Lewis XV. as the true Augustan age of France.

The truth is, their present writers have not fallen so far short of the merits of their ancestors as ours have done. That self-sufficiency now mentioned may have been of service to them in this particular. By fancying themselves superior to their ancestors, they have been encouraged to enter the lists with confidence; and by not being dazzled at the splendour of another's reputation, have sometimes had sagacity to mark out an unbeaten path to fame for themselves.

Other causes also may be assigned, that their second growth of genius is still more vigorous than ours. Their encouragements to merit are more skilfully directed, the link of patronage and learning still continues unbroken. The French nobility have certainly a most pleasing way of satisfying the vanity of an author without indulging his avarice. A man of literary merit is sure of being caressed by the great, though seldom enriched. His pension from the crown just supplies half a competence, and the sale of his labours makes some small addition to his circumstances; thus the author leads a life of splendid poverty, and seldom becomes wealthy or indolent enough to discontinue an exertion of those abilities by which he rose. With the English it is different; our writers of rising merit are generally neglected, while the few of an established reputation are overpaid by luxurious affluence. The young encounter every hardship which generally attends upon aspiring indigence; the old enjoy the vulgar, and perhaps the more prudent, satisfaction of putting riches in competition with fame. Those are often seen to

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spend their youth in want and obscurity; these are sometimes found to lead an old age of indolence and avarice. But such treatment must naturally be expected from Englishmen, whose national character it is to be slow and cautious in making friends, but violent in friendships once contracted. The English nobility, in short, are often known to give greater rewards to genius than the French, who, however, are much more judicious in the application of their empty favours.

The fair sex in France have also not a little contributed to prevent the decline of taste and literature, by expecting such qualifications in their admirers. A man of fashion at Paris, however contemptible we may think him here, must be acquainted with the reigning modes of philosophy, as well as of dress, to be able to entertain his mistress agreeably. The sprightly pedants are not to be caught by dumb shew, by the squeeze of the hand, or the ogling of a broad eye; but must be pursued at once through all the labyrinths of the Newtonian system, or the metaphysics of Locke. I have seen as bright a circle of beauty at the chymical lectures of Rouelle as gracing the court at Versailles. And indeed wisdom never appears so charming as when graced and protected by beauty.

To these advantages may be added the reception of their language in the different courts of Europe. An author who excels is sure of having all the polite for admirers, and is encouraged to write by the pleasing expectation of universal fame. Add to this, that those countries, who can make nothing good from their own language, have lately begun to write in this, some of whose productions contribute to support the present literary reputation of France.

There are therefore many among the French who do honour to the present age, and whose writings

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will be transmitted to posterity with an ample share of fame; some of the most celebrated are as follow:

Voltaire, whose voluminous yet spirited productions are too well known to require an eulogy; does he not resemble the champion mentioned by Xenophon, of great reputation in all the gymnastic exercises united, but inferior to each champion singly, who excels only in one?

Montesquieu, a name equally deserving fame with the former; the Spirit of Laws is an instance how much genius is able to lead learning. His system has been adopted by the literati; and yet is it not possible for opinions equally plausible to be formed upon opposite principles, if a genius like his could be found to attempt such an undertaking? He seems more a poet than a philosopher.

Rousseau of Geneva; A professed man-hater, or more properly speaking, a philosopher enraged with one half of mankind, because they unavoidably make the other half unhappy. Such sentiments are generally the result of much good nature and little experience.

Pyron, an author possessed of as much wit as any man alive, yet with as little prudence to turn it to his own advantage. A comedy of his, called La Metromanie, is the best theatrical production that has appeared of late in Europe. But I know not whether I should most commend his genius or censure his obscenity; his ode à Priape, has justly excluded him from a place in the academy of Belles Lettres. However, the good-natured Montesquieu by his interest procured the starving bard a trifling pension. His own epitaph was all the revenge he took upon the academy for being repulsed.

Cy git Pyron qui ne fut jamais rien
Pas même Academicien.

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Crebillon junior; A writer of real merit, but guilty of the same indelicate faults with the former. Wit employed in dressing up obscenity is like the art used in painting a corpse; it may be thus rendered tolerable to one sense, but fails not quickly to offend some other.

Gresset is agreeable and easy. His comedy called the Méchant, and an humorous poem entitled Ververt, have original merit. He was bred a jesuit, but his wit procured his dismission from the society. This last work particularly could expect no pardon from the convent, being a satire against nunneries!

D'Alembert has united an extensive skill in scientifical learning with the most refined taste for the polite arts. His excellency in both has procured him a seat in each academy.

Diderot is an elegant writer and subtile reasoner. He is the supposed author of the famous Thesis which the abbé Prade sustained before the doctors of the Sorbonne. It was levelled against Christianity, and the Sorbonne too hastily gave it their sanction. They perceived its purport, however, when it was too late. The college was brought into some contempt, and the abbé obliged to take refuge at the court of Berlin.

The Marquis D'Argens attempts to add the character of a philosopher to the vices of a debauchee.

The catalogue might be increased with several other authors of merit, such as Marivaux, Le Franc, Saint Foix, Destouches, and Modonville; but let it suffice to say, that by these the character of the present age is tolerably supported. Though their poets seldom rise to fine enthusiasm, they never sink into absurdity; though they fail to astonish, they are generally possessed of talents to please.

The age of Lewis XIV. notwithstanding these respectable names is still vastly superior. For besides the general tendency of critical corruption, which shall

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be spoken of by-and-by, there are other symptoms which indicate a decline. There is, for instance, a fondness of scepticism, which runs through the works of some of their most applauded writers, and which the numerous class of their imitators have contributed to diffuse. Nothing can be a more certain sign that genius is in the wane than its being obliged to fly to paradox for support, and attempting to be erroneously agreeable. A man, who with all the impotence of wit, and all the eager desires of infidelity, writes against the religion of his country, may raise doubts, but will never give conviction; all he can do is to render society less happy than he found it. It was a good manner which the father of the late poet Saint Foix took to reclaim his son from this juvenile error. The young poet had shut himself up for some time in his study, and his father, willing to know what had engaged his attention so closely, upon entering found him busied in drawing up a new system of religion, and endeavouring to shew the absurdity of that already established. The old man knew by experience, that it was useless to endeavour to convince a vain young man by right reason; so only desired his company up stairs. When come into the father's apartment, he takes his son by the hand, and drawing back a curtain at one end of the room, discovered a crucifix exquisitely painted. "My son," says he, "you desire to change the religion "of your country, behold the fate of a reformer." The truth is, vanity is more apt to misguide men than false reasoning; as some had rather be conspicuous in a mob, than unnoticed even in privy council, so others choose rather to be foremost in the retinue of error, than follow in the train of truth. What influence the conduct of such writers may have on the morals of a people is not my business here to determine. Certain I am, that it has a manifest tendency to subvert the literary merits of the

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country in view. The change of religion in every nation has hitherto produced barbarism and ignorance, and such will be probably its consequences in every future period. For when the laws and the opinions of society are made to clash, harmony is dissolved, and all the parts of peace unavoidably crushed in the encounter.

The writers of this country have also of late fallen into a method of considering every part of art and science as arising from simple principles. The success of Montesquieu, and one or two more, has induced all the subordinate ranks of genius into vicious imitation. To this end they turn to our view that side of the subject which contributes to support their hypothesis, while the objections are generally passed over in silence. Thus an universal system rises from a partial representation of the question, a whole is concluded from a part, a book appears entirely new, and the fancy-built fabric is styled for a short time very ingenious. In this manner we have seen of late almost every subject in morals, natural history, politics, economy, and commerce treated; subjects naturally proceeding on many principles, and some even opposite to each other, are all taught to proceed along the line of systematic simplicity, and continue, like other agreeable falsehoods, extremely pleasing till they are detected.

I must still add another fault, of a nature somewhat similar to the former. As those above mentioned are for contracting a single science into system, so those I am going to speak of are for drawing up a system of all the sciences united. Such undertakings as these are carried on by different writers cemented into one body, and concurring in the same design, by the mediation of a bookseller. From these inauspicious combinations proceed those monsters of learning, the Trevoux, Encyclopedies, and Bibliotheques, of the age. In making these, men of every

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rank in literature are employed, wits and dunces contribute their share, and Diderot, as well as Desmaretz, are candidates for oblivion. The genius of the first supplies the gale of favour, and the latter adds the useful ballast of stupidity. By such means, the enormous mass heavily makes its way among the public, and, to borrow a bookseller's phrase, the whole impression moves off. These great collections of learning may serve to make us inwardly repine at our own ignorance, may serve, when gilt and lettered, to adorn the lower shelves of a regular library: but woe to the reader, who, not daunted at the immense distance between one great pasteboard and the other, opens the volume and explores his way through a region so extensive, but barren of entertainment. No unexpected landscape there to delight the imagination; no diversity of prospect to cheat the painful journey; he sees the wide extended desert lie before him; what is past only increases his terror of what is to come. His course is not half finished, he looks behind him with affright, and forward with despair. Perseverance is at last overcome, and a night of oblivion lends its friendly aid to terminate the perplexity.

CHAP. IX.

Of Learning in Great Britain.

To acquire a character for learning among the English at present, it is necessary to know much more than is either important or useful. It seems the spirit of the times for men here to exhaust their natural sagacity in exploring the intricacies of another man's thought, and thus never to have leisure

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to think for themselves; others have carried on learning from that stage where the good sense of our ancestors have thought it too minute or too speculative to instruct or amuse. By the industry of such, the sciences, which in themselves are easy of access, affright the learner with the severity of their appearance. He sees them surrounded with speculation and subtilty, placed there by their professors, as if with a view of deterring his approach. Hence it happens, that the generality of readers fly from the scholar to the compiler, who offers them a more safe and speedy conveyance.

From this fault also arises that mutual contempt between the scholar and the man of the world, of which every day's experience furnisheth instances.

The man of taste, however, stands neutral in this controversy; he seems placed in a middle station, between the world and the cell, between learning and common sense. He teaches the vulgar on what part of a character to lay the emphasis of praise, and the scholar where to point his application so as to deserve it. By his means even the philosopher acquires popular applause, and all that are truly great, the admiration of posterity. By means of polite learning alone the patriot and the hero, the man who praiseth virtue, and he who practises it, who fights successfully for his country, or who dies in its defence, becomes immortal. But this taste now seems cultivated with less ardour than formerly, and consequently the public must one day expect to see the advantages arising from it, and the exquisite pleasures it affords our leisure entirely annihilated. For if, as it should seem, the rewards of genius are improperly directed; if those who are capable of supporting the honour of the times by their writings prefer opulence to fame; if the stage should be shut to writers of merit, and open only to interest or intrigue: if such should happen to be the vile complexion of the times, (and

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that it is nearly so we shall shortly see,) the very virtue of the age will be forgotten by posterity, and nothing remembered, except our filling a chasm in the registers of time, or having served to continue the species.

CHAP. X.

Of rewarding Genius in England.

THERE is nothing authors are more apt to lament, than want of encouragement from the age. Whatever their differences in other respects, they are all ready to unite in this complaint, and each indirectly offers himself as an instance of the truth of his assertion.

The beneficed divine, whose wants are only imaginary, expostulates as bitterly as the poorest author. Should interest or good fortune advance the divine to a bishopric, or the poor son of Parnassus into that place which the other has resigned; both are authors no longer: the one goes to prayers once a day, kneels upon cushions of velvet, and thanks gracious Heaven for having made the circumstances of all mankind so extremely happy; the other battens on all the delicacies of life, enjoys his wife and his easy chair, and sometimes, for the sake of conversation, deplores the luxury of these degenerate days.

All encouragements to merit are therefore misapplied, which make the author too rich to continue his profession. There can be nothing more just than the old observation, that authors, like running horses, should be fed but not fattened. If we would continue them in our service, we should reward them with a little money and a great deal of praise, still

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keeping their avarice subservient to their ambition. Not that I think a writer incapable of filling an employment with dignity. I would only insinuate that when made a bishop or statesman, he will continue to please us as a writer no longer. As, to resume a former allusion, the running horse when fattened will still be fit for very useful purposes, though unqualified for a courser.

No nation gives greater encouragements to learning than we do; yet at the same time none are so injudicious in the application. We seem to confer them with the same view that statesmen have been known to grant employments at court, rather as bribes to silence than incentives to emulation.

Upon this principle all our magnificent endowments of colleges are erroneous, and at best more frequently enrich the prudent than reward the ingenious. A lad, whose passions are not strong enough in youth to mislead him from that path of science which his tutors, and not his inclinations, have chalked out, by four or five years perseverance may probably obtain every advantage and honour his college can bestow. I forget whether the simile has been used before, but I would compare the man, whose youth has been thus passed in the tranquillity of dispassionate prudence, to liquors which never ferment, and consequently continue always muddy. Passions may raise a commotion in the youthful breast, but they disturb only to refine it. However this be, mean talents are often rewarded in colleges with an easy subsistence. The candidates for preferments of this kind often regard their admission as a patent for future indolence; so that a life begun in studious labour is often continued in luxurious indolence.

Among the universities abroad I have ever observed their riches and their learning in a reciprocal proportion, their stupidity and pride increasing with

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their opulence Happening once in conversation with Gaubius of Leyden to mention the college of Edinburgh, he began by complaining that all the English students which formerly came to his university now went entirely there; and the fact surprised him more, as Leyden was now as well as ever furnished with masters excellent in their respective professions. He concluded by asking, if the professors of Edinburgh were rich? I replied, that the salary of a professor there seldom amounted to more than thirty pounds a year. Poor men, says he, I heartily wish they were better provided for; until they become rich, we can have no expectation of English students at Leyden.

Premiums also, proposed for literary excellence, when given as encouragements to boys may be useful; but when designed as rewards to men are certainly misapplied. We have seldom seen a performance of any great merit, in consequence of rewards proposed in this manner. Who has ever observed a writer of any eminence a candidate in so precarious a contest? The man who knows the real value of his own genius will no more venture it upon an uncertainty, than he who knows the true use of a guinea will stake it with a sharper.

Every encouragement given to stupidity, when known to be such, is also a negative insult upon genius. This appears in nothing more evident than the undistinguished success of those who solicit subscriptions. When first brought into fashion, subscriptions were conferred upon the ingenious alone, or those who were reputed such. But at present we see them made a resource of indigence, and requested not as rewards of merit, but as a relief of distress. If tradesmen happen to want skill in conducting their own business, yet they are able to write a book; if mechanics want money, or ladies shame, they write books and solicit subscriptions.

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Scarcely a morning passes, that proposals of this nature are not thrust into the half-opening doors of the rich, with perhaps a paltry petition, shewing the author's wants but not his merits. I would not willingly prevent that pity which is due to indigence; but while the streams of liberality are thus diffused, they must in the end become proportionably shallow.

What then are the proper encouragements of genius? I answer, subsistence and respect; for these are rewards congenial to its nature. Every animal has an aliment peculiarly suited to its constitution. The heavy ox seeks nourishment from earth; the light cameleon has been supposed to exist on air; a sparer diet even than this will satisfy the man of true genius, for he makes a luxurious banquet upon empty applause. It is this alone which has inspired all that ever was truly great and noble among us. It is, as Cicero finely calls it, the echo of virtue. Avarice is the passion of inferior natures; money the pay of the common herd. The author who draws his quill merely to take a purse, no more deserves success than he who presents a pistol.

When the link between patronage and learning was entire, then all who deserved fame were in a capacity of attaining it. When the great Somers was at the helm, patronage was fashionable among our nobility. The middle ranks of mankind, who generally imitate the Great, then followed their example, and applauded from fashion if not from feeling. I have heard an old poet* of that glorious age say, that a dinner with his lordship has procured him invitations for the whole week following; that an airing in his patron's chariot has supplied him with a citizen's coach on every future occasion. For who would not be proud to entertain a man who kept so much good company?

* Dr. Young.

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But this link now seems entirely broken. Since the days of a certain prime minister of inglorious memory, the learned have been kept pretty much at a distance. A jockey, or a laced player, supplies the place of the scholar, poet, or the man of virtue. Those conversations, once the result of wisdom, wit, and innocence, are now turned to humbler topics, little more being expected from a companion than a laced coat, a pliant bow, and an immoderate friendship for—a well served table.

Wit, when neglected by the great, is generally despised by the vulgar. Those who are unacquainted with the world, are apt to fancy the man of wit as leading a very agreeable life. They conclude, perhaps, that he is attended to with silent admiration, and dictates to the rest of mankind with all the eloquence of conscious superiority. Very different is his present situation. He is called an author, and all know that an author is a thing only to be laughed at. His person, not his jest, becomes the mirth of the company. At his approach the most fat unthinking face brightens into malicious meaning. Even aldermen laugh, and revenge on him the ridicule which was lavished on their forefathers:

> Etiam victis redit in præcordia virtus,
> Victoresque cadunt.

It is indeed a reflection somewhat mortifying to the author, who breaks his ranks, and singles out for public favour, to think that he must combat contempt before he can arrive at glory. That he must expect to have all the fools of society united against him before he can hope for the applause of the judicious. For this however he must prepare beforehand; as those who have no idea of the difficulty of his employment will be apt to regard his inactivity as idleness, and not having a notion of the

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pangs of uncomplying thought in themselves, it is not to be expected they should have any desire of rewarding it in others.

Voltaire has finely described the hardships a man must encounter who writes for the public. I need make no apology for the length of the quotation.

"Your fate, my dear Le Fevre, is too strongly "marked to permit your retiring. The bee must "toil in making honey, the silk-worm must spin, "the philosopher must dissect them, and you are "born to sing of their labours. You must be a poet "and a scholar, even though your inclinations should "resist; nature is too strong for inclination. But "hope not, my friend, to find tranquillity in the em-"ployment you are going to pursue. The route of "genius is not less obstructed with disappointment "than that of ambition.

"If you have the misfortune not to excel in your "profession as a poet, repentance must tincture all "your future enjoyments. If you succeed, you "make enemies. You tread a narrow path; con-"tempt on one side, and hatred on the other, are "ready to seize you upon the slightest deviation.

"But why must I be hated, you will perhaps "reply, why must I be persecuted for having written "a pleasing poem, for having produced an applauded "tragedy, or for otherwise instructing or amusing "mankind or myself?

"My dear friend, these very successes shall render "you miserable for life. Let me suppose your "performance has merit, let me suppose you have "surmounted the teazing employments of printing "and publishing, how will you be able to lull the "critics, who, like Cerberus, are posted at all the "avenues of literature, and who settle the merits of "every new performance. How, I say, will you be "able to make them open in your favour? There "are always three or four literary journals in France,

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" as many in Holland, each supporting opposite in-
" terests. The booksellers who guide these periodi-
" cal compilations find their account in being se-
" vere; the authors employed by them have wretch-
" edness to add to their natural malignity. The
" majority may be in your favour, but you may
" depend on being torn by the rest. Loaded with
" unmerited scurrility perhaps you reply; they rejoin;
" both plead at the bar of the public, and both are
" condemned to ridicule.

" But if you write for the stage your case is still
" more worthy compassion. You are there to be
" judged by men whom the custom of the times has
" rendered contemptible. Irritated by their own
" inferiority they exert all their little tyranny upon
" you, revenging upon the author the insults they
" receive from the public. From such men then you
" are to expect your sentence. Suppose your piece
" admitted, acted: one single ill-natured jest from
" the pit is sufficient to cancel all your labours. But
" allowing that it succeeds. There are an hundred
" squibs flying all abroad to prove that it should not
" have succeeded. You shall find your brightest
" scenes burlesqued by the ignorant; and the learned
" who know a little Greek, and nothing of their
" native language, affect to despise you.

" But perhaps with a panting heart you carry
" your piece before a woman of quality. She gives
" the labours of your brain to her maid to be cut
" into shreds for curling her hair; while the laced
" footman, who carries the gaudy livery of luxury,
" insults your appearance, who bear the livery of
" indigence.

" But granting your excellence has at last forced
" Envy to confess that your works have some merit;
" this then is all the reward you can expect while
" living. However, for this tribute of applause

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" you must expect persecution. You will be re-
" puted the author of scandal which you have never
" seen, of verses you despise, and of sentiments di-
" rectly contrary to your own. In short, you must
" embark in some one party, or all parties will be
" against you.

" There are among us a number of learned societies,
" where a lady presides, whose wit begins to twinkle,
" when the splendour of her beauty begins to decline.
" One or two men of learning compose her ministers
" of state. These must be flattered, or made enemies
" by being neglected. Thus, though you had the
" merit of all antiquity united in your person, you
" grow old in misery and disgrace. Every place
" designed for men of letters is filled up by men of
" intrigue. Some nobleman's private tutor, some
" court flatterer shall bear away the prize, and leave
" you to anguish and to disappointment."

Yet it were well if none but the dunces of society were combined to render the profession of an author ridiculous or unhappy. Men of the first eminence are often found to indulge this illiberal vein of raillery. Two contending writers often, by the opposition of their wit, render their profession contemptible in the eyes of ignorant persons, who should have been taught to admire. And yet, whatever the reader may think of himself, it is at least two to one but he is a greater blockhead than the most scribbling dunce he affects to despise.

The poet's poverty is a standing topic of contempt. His writing for bread is an unpardonable offence. Perhaps of all mankind an author in these times is used most hardly. We keep him poor and yet revile his poverty. Like angry parents who correct their children till they cry, and then correct them for crying, we reproach him for living by his wit, and yet allow him no other means to live.

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His taking refuge in garrets and cellars has of late been violently objected to him, and that by men who I dare hope are more apt to pity than insult his distress. Is poverty the writer's fault? No doubt he knows how to prefer a bottle of champaign to the nectar of the neighbouring ale-house, or a venison pasty to a plate of potatoes. Want of delicacy is not in him but in us, who deny him the opportunity of making an elegant choice.

Wit certainly is the property of those who have it, nor should we be displeased if it is the only property a man sometimes has. We must not underrate him who uses it for subsistence, and flies from the ingratitude of the age even to a bookseller for redress. If the profession of an author is to be laughed at by the stupid, it is certainly better to be contemptibly rich than contemptibly poor. For all the wit that ever adorned the human mind will at present no more shield the author's poverty from ridicule, than his high-topped gloves conceal the unavoidable omissions of his laundress.

To be more serious, new fashions, follies and vices, make new monitors necessary in every age. An author may be considered as a merciful substitute to the legislature; he acts not by punishing crimes but preventing them; however virtuous the present age, there may be still growing employment for ridicule or reproof, for persuasion or satire. If the author be therefore still so necessary among us, let us treat him with proper consideration as a child of the public, not a rent-charge on the community. And indeed a *child* of the public he is in all respects; for while so well able to direct others, how incapable is he frequently found of guiding himself! His simplicity exposes him to all the insidious approaches of cunning; his sensibility to the slightest invasions of contempt. Though possessed of fortitude to stand unmoved the expected bursts of an

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earthquake, yet of feelings so exquisitely poignant as to agonize under the slightest disappointment. Broken rest, tasteless meals, and causeless anxiety, shorten his life, or render it unfit for active employment; prolonged vigils and intense application still farther contract his span, and make his time glide insensibly away. Let us not then aggravate those natural inconveniencies by neglect; we have had sufficient instances of this kind already. Sale and Moore will suffice for one age at least. But they are dead, and their sorrows are over. The neglected author of the Persian eclogues, which, however inaccurate, excel any in our language, is still alive. Happy, if *insensible* of our neglect, not *raging* at our ingratitude*. It is enough that the age has already produced instances of men pressing foremost in the lists of fame, and worthy of better times, schooled by continued adversity into an hatred of their kind, flying from thought to drunkenness, yielding to the united pressure of labour, penury, and sorrow, sinking unheeded, without one friend to drop a tear on their unattended obsequies, and indebted to charity for a grave.

The author, when unpatronized by the Great, has naturally recourse to the bookseller. There cannot be perhaps imagined a combination more prejudicial to taste than this. It is the interest of the one to allow as little for writing, and of the other to write as much as possible; accordingly tedious compilations and periodical magazines are the result of their joint endeavours. In these circumstances the author bids adieu to fame, writes for bread, and for that only imagination is seldom called in; he sits down to address the venal muse with the most phlegmatic apathy; and as we are told of the Russian, courts his mistress by falling

* Our author here alludes to the insanity of Collins.

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asleep in her lap. His reputation never spreads in a wider circle than that of the trade, who generally value him, not for the fineness of his compositions, but the quantity he works off in a given time.

A long habit of writing for bread thus turns the ambition of every author at last into avarice. He finds that he has written many years, that the public are scarcely acquainted even with his name; he despairs of applause, and turns to profit which invites him. He finds that money procures all those advantages, that respect, and that ease, which he vainly expected from fame. Thus the man who, under the protection of the Great, might have done honour to humanity, when only patronized by the bookseller, becomes a thing little superior to the fellow who works at the press.

CHAP. XI.

Of the Marks of Literary Decay in France and England.

THE faults already mentioned are such as learning is often found to flourish under; but there is one of a much more dangerous nature which has begun to fix itself among us, I mean criticism, which may properly be called the natural destroyer of polite learning. We have seen that critics, or those whose only business is to write books upon other books, are always more numerous, as learning is more diffused; and experience has shewn, that instead of promoting its interest, which they profess

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to do, they generally injure it. This decay which criticism produces may be deplored, but can scarcely be remedied, as the man who writes against the critics is obliged to add himself to the number. Other depravations in the republic of letters, such as affectation in some popular writer leading others into vicious imitation; political struggles in the state; a depravity of morals among the people; ill-directed encouragement, or no encouragement from the Great; these have been often found to co-operate in the decline of literature; and it has sometimes declined, as in modern Italy, without them; but an increase of criticism has always portended a decay. Of all misfortunes therefore in the commonwealth of letters, this of judging from rule, and not from feeling, is the most severe. At such a tribunal, no work of original merit can please. Sublimity, if carried to an exalted height, approaches burlesque, and humour sinks into vulgarity; the person who cannot feel may ridicule both as such, and bring rules to corroborate his assertion. There is, in short, no excellence in writing that such judges may not place among the neighbouring defects. Rules render the reader more difficult to be pleased, and abridge the author's power of pleasing.

If we turn to either country, we shall perceive evident symptoms of this natural decay beginning to appear. Upon a moderate calculation, there seems to be as many volumes of criticism published in those countries as of all other kinds of polite erudition united. Paris sends forth not less than four literary journals every month, the Anné-literaire, and the Feuille by Freron, the Journal Etrangère by the Chevalier D'Arc, and Le Mercure by Marmontel. We have two literary reviews in London, with critical newspapers and magazines without number. The compilers of these resemble the commoners of Rome; they are all for levelling property,

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not by increasing their own but by diminishing that of others. The man who has any good nature in his disposition must, however, be somewhat displeased to see distinguished reputations often the sport of ignorance: to see by one false pleasantry the future peace of a worthy man's life disturbed, and this only, because he has unsuccessfully attempted to instruct or amuse us. Though ill nature is far from being wit, yet it is generally laughed at as such. The critic enjoys the triumph, and ascribes to his parts what is only due to his effrontery. I fire with indignation when I see persons wholly destitute of education and genius indent to the press, and thus turn book-makers, adding to the sin of criticism the sin of ignorance also; whose trade is a bad one, and who are bad workmen in the trade.

When I consider those industrious men as indebted to the works of others for a precarious subsistence, when I see them coming down at stated intervals to rummage the bookseller's compter for materials to work upon, it raises a smile though mixed with pity. It reminds me of an animal called by naturalists the soldier. This little creature, says the historian, is passionately fond of a shell, but not being supplied with one by nature, has recourse to the deserted shell of some other. I have seen these harmless reptiles, continues he, come down once a year from the mountains, rank and file cover the whole shore and ply busily about, each in request of a shell to please it. Nothing can be more amusing than their industry upon this occasion. One shell is too big, another too little, they enter and keep possession sometimes for a good while until one is, at last, found entirely to please. When all are thus properly equipped, they march up again to the mountains, and live in their new acquisition till under a necessity of changing.

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There is indeed scarcely an error, of which our present writers are guilty, that does not arise from their opposing systems; there is scarcely an error that criticism cannot be brought to excuse. From this proceeds the affected security of our odes, the tuneless flow of our blank verse, the pompous epithet, laboured diction, and every other deviation from common sense, which procures the poet the applause of the month; he is praised by all, read by a few, and soon forgotten.

There never was an unbeaten path trodden by the poet that the critic did not endeavour to reclaim him by calling his attempt innovation. This might be instanced in Dante, who first followed nature, and was persecuted by the critics as long as he lived. Thus novelty, one of the greatest beauties in poetry, must be avoided, or the connoisseur be displeased. It is one of the chief privileges however of genius to fly from the herd of imitators by some happy singularity; for should he stand still, his heavy pursuers will at length certainly come up and fairly dispute the victory.

The ingenious Mr. Hogarth used to assert, that every one except the connoisseur was a judge of painting. The same may be asserted of writing; the public in general set the whole piece in the proper point of view; the critic lays his eye close to all its minuteness, and condemns or approves in detail. And this may be the reason why so many writers at present are apt to appeal from the tribunal of criticism to that of the people.

From a desire in the critic of grafting the spirit of ancient languages upon the English have proceeded of late several disagreeable instances of pedantry. Among the number I think we may reckon blank verse. Nothing but the greatest sublimity of subject can render such a measure pleasing;

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however, we now see it used upon the most trivial occasions; it has particularly found its way into our didactic poetry, and is likely to bring that species of composition into disrepute, for which the English are deservedly famous.

Those who are acquainted with writing, know that our language runs almost naturally into blank verse. The writers of our novels, romances, and all of this class, who have no notion of style, naturally hobble into this unharmonious measure. If rhymes, therefore, be more difficult, for that very reason I would have our poets write in rhyme. Such a restriction upon the thought of a good poet often lifts and increases the vehemence of every sentiment; for fancy, like a fountain, plays highest by diminishing the aperture. But rhymes, it will be said, are a remnant of a monkish stupidity, an innovation upon the poetry of the ancients. They are but indifferently acquainted with antiquity who make the assertion. Rhymes are probably of older date than either the Greek or Latin dactyl or spondê. The Celtic, which is allowed to be the first language spoken in Europe, has ever preserved them, as we may find in the Edda of Iceland, and the Irish carols still sung among the original inhabitants of that island. Olaus Wormius gives us some of the Teutonic poetry in this way; and Pontoppidan, bishop of Bergen, some of the Norwegian; in short, this jingle of sounds is almost natural to mankind; at least it is so to our language, if we may judge from many unsuccessful attempts to throw it off.

I should not have employed so much time in opposing this erroneous innovation, if it were not apt to introduce another in its train: I mean, a disgusting solemnity of manner into our poetry; and as the prose writer has been ever found to follow the poet, it must consequently banish in both all that

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agreeable trifling, which, if I may so express it, often deceives us into instruction. The finest sentiment and the most weighty truth may put on a pleasant face, and it is even virtuous to jest when serious advice must be disgusting. But instead of this, the most trifling performance among us now assumes all the didactic stiffness of wisdom. The most diminutive son of fame or of famine has his *we* and his *us*, his *firstlys* and his *secondlys*, as methodical as if bound in cow-hide and closed with clasps of brass. Were these Monthly Reviews and Magazines frothy, pert, or absurd, they might find some pardon; but to be dull and dronish is an encroachment on the prerogative of a folio. These things should be considered as pills to purge melancholy; they should be made up in our splenetic climate to be taken as physic, and not so as to be used when we take it.

However, by the power of one single monosyllable our critics have almost got the victory over humour amongst us. Does the poet paint the absurdities of the vulgar; then he is *low:* does he exaggerate the features of folly to render it more thoroughly ridiculous, he is then *very low.* In short, they have proscribed the comic or satirical muse from every walk but high life, which, though abounding in fools as well as the humblest station, is by no means so fruitful in absurdity. Among well-bred fools we may despise much, but have little to laugh at; nature seems to present us with an universal blank of silk, ribands, smiles, and whispers: absurdity is the poet's game, and good breeding is the nice concealment of absurdities. The truth is, the critic generally mistakes humour for wit, which is a very different excellence. Wit raises human nature above its level; humour acts a contrary part, and equally depresses it. To expect exalted humour is a contradiction in terms;

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and the critic, by demanding an impossibility from the comic poet, has in effect banished new comedy from the stage. But to put the same thought in a different light: when an unexpected similitude in two objects strikes the imagination; in other words, when a thing is *wittily* expressed, all our pleasure turns into admiration of the artist, who had fancy enough to draw the picture. When a thing is *humorously* described, our burst of laughter proceeds from a very different cause; we compare the absurdity of the character represented with our own, and triumph in our conscious superiority. No natural defect can be a cause of laughter, because it is a misfortune to which ourselves are liable; a defect of this kind changes the passion into pity or horror; we only laugh at those instances of moral absurdity, to which we are conscious we ourselves are not liable. For instance, should I describe a man as wanting his nose, there is no humour in this, as it is an accident to which human nature is subject and may be any man's case: but should I represent this man without his nose as extremely curious in the choice of his snuff-box, we here see him guilty of an absurdity, of which we imagine it impossible for ourselves to be guilty, and therefore applaud our own good sense on the comparison. Thus then the pleasure we receive from wit turns on the admiration of another; that which we feel from humour centres in the admiration of ourselves. The poet, therefore, must place the object he would have the subject of humour in a state of inferiority; in other words, the subject of humour must be low.

The solemnity worn by many of our modern writers is, I fear, often the mask of dulness; for certain it is, it seems to fit every author who pleases to put it on. By the complexion of many of our late publications, one might be apt to cry out with Cicero, *Civem mehercule non puto esse qui his temporibus*

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ridere possit. On my conscience, I believe we have all forgot to laugh in these days. Such writers probably make no distinction between what is praised and what is pleasing; between those commendations which the reader pays his own discernment, and those which are the genuine result of his sensations. It were to be wished therefore that we no longer found pleasure with the inflated style that has for some years been looked upon as fine writing, and which every young writer is now obliged to adopt, if he chooses to be read. We should now dispense with loaded epithet and dressing up trifles with dignity. For to use an obvious instance, it is not those who make the greatest noise with their wares in the streets that have most to sell. Let us, instead of writing finely, try to write naturally; not hunt after lofty expressions to deliver mean ideas, nor be for ever gaping, when we only mean to deliver a whisper.

CHAP. XII.

Of the Stage.

Our Theatre has been generally confessed to share in this general decline, though partaking of the shew and decoration of the Italian opera with the propriety and declamation of French performance. The stage also is more magnificent with us than any other in Europe, and the people in general fonder of theatrical entertainment. Yet still as our pleasures, as well as more important concerns, are generally managed by party; the stage has felt its influence. The managers and all who espouse their side are for decoration and ornament; the critic, and all

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who have studied French decorum, are for regularity and declamation. Thus it is almost impossible to please both parties; and the poet by attempting it finds himself often incapable of pleasing either. If he introduces stage pomp, the critic consigns his performance to the vulgar; if he indulges in recital and simplicity, it is accused of insipidity or dry affectation.

From the nature therefore of our theatre and the genius of our country, it is extremely difficult for a dramatic poet to please his audience. But happy would he be were these the only difficulties he had to encounter; there are many other more dangerous combinations against the little wit of the age. Our poet's performance must undergo a process truly chymical before it is presented to the public. It must be tried in the manager's fire, strained through a licenser, suffer from repeated corrections till it may be a mere *caput mortuum* when it arrives before the public.

The success however of pieces upon the stage would be of little moment, did it not influence the success of the same piece in the closet. Nay I think it would be more for the interests of virtue if stage performances were read, not acted; made rather our companions in the cabinet than on the theatre. While we are readers, every moral sentiment strikes us in all its beauty, but the love scenes are frigid, tawdry, and disgusting. When we are spectators all the persuasives to vice receive an additional lustre. The love scene is aggravated, the obscenity heightened, the best actors figure in the most debauched characters, while the parts of morality, as they are called, are thrown to some mouthing machine, who puts even virtue out of countenance by his wretched imitation.

But whatever be the incentives to vice which are found at the theatre, public pleasures are generally less guilty than solitary ones. To make our solitary

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satisfactions truly innocent, the actor is useful, as by his means the poet's work makes its way from the stage to the closet, for all must allow that the reader receives more benefit by perusing a well-written play than by seeing it acted.

But how is this rule inverted on our theatres at present! Old pieces are revived and scarcely any new ones admitted; the actor is ever in our eye, and the poet seldom permitted to appear; the public are again obliged to ruminate over those hashes of absurdity, which were disgusting to our ancestors even in an age of ignorance; and the stage, instead of serving the people, is made subservient to the interests of avarice.

We seem to be pretty much in the situation of travellers at a Scotch inn; vile entertainment is served up, complained of and sent down; up comes worse and that also is changed, and every change makes our wretched cheer more unsavoury. What must be done? only sit down contented, cry up all that comes before us, and admire even the absurdities of Shakspeare.

Let the reader suspend his censure; I admire the beauties of this great father of our stage as much as they deserve, but could wish for the honour of our country, and for his honour too, that many of his scenes were forgotten. A man blind of one eye should always be painted in profile. Let the spectator, who assists at any of these new revived pieces, only ask himself whether he would approve such a performance if written by a modern poet; I fear he will find that much of his applause proceeds merely from the sound of a name and an empty veneration for antiquity. In fact, the revival of those pieces of forced humour, far-fetched conceit, and unnatural hyperbole, which have been ascribed to Shakspeare, is rather gibbetting than raising a statue to his memory; it is rather a trick of the actor, who thinks it

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safest acting in exaggerated characters, and who by outstepping nature chooses to exhibit the ridiculous *outré* of an harlequin under the sanction of that venerable name.

What strange vamped comedies, farcical tragedies, or what shall I call them, speaking pantomimes, have we not of late seen. No matter what the play may be, it is the actor who draws an audience. He throws life into all; all are in spirits and merry, in at one door and out at another; the spectator in a fool's paradise knows not what all this means till the last act concludes in matrimony. The piece pleases our critics because it talks old English; and it pleases the galleries because it has ribaldry. True taste or even common sense are out of the question.

But great art must be sometimes used before they can thus impose upon the public. To this purpose a prologue, written with some spirit, generally precedes the piece, to inform us that it was composed by Shakspeare, or old Ben, or somebody else who took them for his model. A face of iron could not have the assurance to avow dislike; the theatre has its partizans who understand the force of combinations, trained up to vociferation, clapping of hands, and clattering of sticks; and though a man might have strength sufficient to overcome a lion in single combat, he may run the risk of being devoured by an army of ants.

I am not insensible that third nights are disagreeable drawbacks upon the annual profits of the stage; I am confident it is much more to the manager's advantage to furbish up all the lumber which the good sense of our ancestors but for his care had consigned to oblivion: it is not with him therefore, but with the public I would expostulate; they have a right to demand respect, and surely those newly-revived plays are no instances of the manager's deference.

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I have been informed that no new play can be admitted upon our theatres unless the author chooses to wait some years, or to use the phrase in fashion, till it comes to be played in turn. A poet thus can never expect to contract a familiarity with the stage, by which alone he can hope to succeed; nor can the most signal success relieve immediate want. Our Saxon ancestors had but one name for a wit and a witch. I will not dispute the propriety of uniting those characters then; but the man who under the present discouragements ventures to write for the stage, whatever claim he may have to the appellation of a wit, at least he has no right to be called a conjuror.

From all that has been said upon the state of our theatre, we may easily foresee whether it is likely to improve or decline; and whether the free-born muse can bear to submit to those restrictions which avarice or power would impose. For the future, it is somewhat unlikely that he whose labours are valuable, or who knows their value, will turn to the stage for either fame or subsistence, when he must at once flatter an actor and please an audience.

CHAP. XIII.

On Universities.

INSTEAD of losing myself in a subject of such extent, I shall only offer a few thoughts as they occur, and leave their connection to the reader.

We seem divided, whether an education formed by travelling or by a sedentary life be preferable. We see more of the world by travel, but more of human nature by remaining at home: as in an

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infirmary the student, who only attends to the disorders of a few patients, is more likely to understand his profession, than he who indiscriminately examines them all.

A youth just landed at the Brille resembles a clown at a puppet-shew; carries his amazement from one miracle to another; from this cabinet of curiosities to that collection of pictures; but wondering is not the way to grow wise.

Whatever resolutions we set ourselves not to keep company with our countrymen abroad, we shall find them broken when once we leave home. Among strangers we consider ourselves as in a solitude, and it is but natural to desire society.

In all the great towns of Europe there are to be found Englishmen residing either from interest or choice; these generally lead a life of continued debauchery; such are the countrymen a traveller is likely to meet with.

This may be the reason why Englishmen are all thought to be mad or melancholy by the vulgar abroad. Their money is giddily and merrily spent among sharpers of their own country; and when that is gone, of all nations the English bear worst that disorder called the *maladie du poche.*

Countries wear very different appearances to travellers of different circumstances. A man who is whirled through Europe in a post-chaise, and the pilgrim who walks the grand tour on foot will form very different conclusions*.

To see Europe with advantage a man should appear in various circumstances of fortune, but the experiment would be too dangerous for young men.

There are many things relative to other countries which can be learned to more advantage at home; their laws and policies are among the number.

* In the first edition our author added, *Haud inexpertus loquor*; for he travelled through France, &c. on foot.

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The greatest advantages which result to youth from travel, are an easy address, the shaking off national prejudices, and the finding nothing ridiculous in national peculiarities. The time spent in these acquisitions could have been more usefully employed at home. An education in a college seems therefore preferable.

We attribute to universities either too much or too little. Some assert that they are the only proper places to advance learning; while others deny even their utility in forming an education. Both are erroneous.

Learning is most advanced in populous cities, where chance often conspires with industry to promote it; where the members of this large university, if I may so call it, catch manners as they rise, study life, not logic, and have the world for correspondents.

The greatest number of universities have ever been founded in times of the greatest ignorance.

New improvements in learning are seldom adopted in colleges until admitted every where else. And this is right; we should always be cautious of teaching the rising generation uncertainties for truth: thus, though the professors in universities have been too frequently found to oppose the advancement of learning; yet when once established they are the properest persons to diffuse it.

There is more knowledge to be acquired from one page of the volume of mankind, if the scholar only knows how to read, than in volumes of antiquity; we grow learned, not wise, by too long a continuance at college.

This points out the time in which we should leave the university; perhaps the age of twenty-one, when at our universities the first degree is generally taken, is the proper period.

The universities of Europe may be divided into three classes. Those upon the old scholastic estab-

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lishment, where the pupils are immured, talk nothing but Latin, and support every day syllogistical disputations in school-philosophy. Would not one be apt to imagine this was the proper education to make a man a fool? Such are the universities of Prague, Louvain, and Padua. The second is, where the pupils are under few restrictions, where all scholastic jargon is banished, where they take a degree when they think proper, and live not in the college but city. Such are Edinburgh, Leyden, Gottingen, Geneva. The third is a mixture of the two former, where the pupils are restrained, but not confined; where many though not all the absurdities of scholastic philosophy are suppressed, and where the first degree is taken after four years matriculation. Such are Oxford, Cambridge, and Dublin.

As for the first class, their absurdities are too apparent to admit of a parallel. It is disputed which of the two last are more conducive to national improvement.

Skill in the professions is acquired more by practice than study; two or three years may be sufficient for learning their rudiments. The universities of Edinburgh, &c. grant a licence for practising them when the student thinks proper, which our universities refuse till after a residence of several years.

The dignity of the professions may be supported by this dilatory proceeding; but many men of learning are thus too long excluded from the lucrative advantages which superior skill has a right to expect.

Those universities must certainly be most frequented, which promise to give in two years the advantages which others will not under twelve.

The man who has studied a profession for three years and practised it for nine more, will certainly know more of his business than he who has only studied it for twelve.

The universities of Edinburgh, &c. must certainly

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be most proper for the study of those professions, in which men choose to turn their learning to profit as soon as possible.

The universities of Oxford, &c. are improper for this, since they keep the student from the world, which after a certain time is the only true school of improvement.

When a degree in the professions can be taken only by men of independent fortunes, the number of candidates in learning is lessened, and consequently the advancement of learning retarded.

This slowness of conferring degrees is a remnant of scholastic barbarity. Paris, Louvain, and those universities which still retain their ancient institutions, confer the doctor's degree slower even than we.

The statutes of every university should be considered as adapted to the laws of its respective government. Those should alter as these happen to fluctuate.

Four years spent in the arts (as they are called in colleges) is perhaps laying too laborious a foundation. Entering a profession without any previous acquisitions of this kind is building too bold a superstructure.

Teaching by lecture, as at Edinburgh, may make men scholars if they think proper; but instructing by examination, as at Oxford, will make them so often against their inclination.

Edinburgh only disposes the student to receive learning; Oxford often makes him actually learned.

In a word, were I poor I should send my son to Leyden or Edinburgh, though the annual expense in each, particularly in the first, is very great. Were I rich I would send him to one of our own universities. By an education received in the first he has the best likelihood of living; by that received in the latter he has the best chance of becoming great.

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We have of late heard much of the necessity of studying oratory. Vespasian was the first who paid professors of rhetoric for publicly instructing youth at Rome. However, those pedants never made an orator.

The best orations that ever were spoken were pronounced in the parliaments of King Charles the First. These men never studied the rules of oratory.

Mathematics are perhaps too much studied at our universities. This seems a science to which the meanest intellects are equal. I forget who it is that says, "All men might understand mathematics if "they would."

The most methodical manner of lecturing, whether on morals or nature, is first rationally to explain, and then produce the experiment. The most instructive method is to shew the experiment first; curiosity is then excited, and attention awakened to every subsequent deduction. Hence it is evident, that in a well-formed education a course of history should ever precede a course of ethics.

The sons of our nobility are permitted to enjoy greater liberties in our universities than those of private men. I should blush to ask the men of learning and virtue, who preside in our seminaries, the reason of such a prejudicial distinction. Our youth should there be inspired with a love of philosophy: and the first maxim among philosophers is, That merit only makes distinction.

Whence has proceeded the vain magnificence of expensive architecture in our colleges? Is it that men study to more advantage in a palace than in a cell? One single performance of taste or genius confers more real honours on its parent university than all the labours of the chissel.

Surely pride itself has dictated to the fellows of our colleges the absurd passion of being attended at meals, and on other public occasions, by those poor men

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who, willing to be scholars, come in upon some charitable foundation. It implies a contradiction, for men to be at once learning the *liberal* arts and at the same time treated as *slaves;* at once studying freedom and practising servitude.

CHAP. XIV.

The Conclusion.

EVERY subject acquires an adventitious importance to him who considers it with application. He finds it more closely connected with human happiness than the rest of mankind are apt to allow; he sees consequences resulting from it which do not strike others with equal conviction; and still pursuing speculation beyond the bounds of reason, too frequently becomes ridiculously earnest in trifles or absurdity.

It will perhaps be incurring this imputation, to deduce an universal degeneracy of manners from so slight an origin as the depravation of taste; to assert that, as a nation grows dull, it sinks into debauchery. Yet such probably may be the consequence of literary decay; or, not to stretch the thought beyond what it will bear, vice and stupidity are always mutually productive of each other.

Life at the greatest and best has been compared to a froward child, that must be humoured and played with till it falls asleep, and then all the care is over. Our few years are laboured away in varying its pleasures; new amusements are pursued with studious attention; the most childish vanities are dignified with titles of importance; and the proudest boast of

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the most aspiring philosopher is no more, than that he provides his little playfellows the greatest pastime with the greatest innocence.

Thus the mind, ever wandering after amusement, when abridged of happiness on one part endeavours to find it on another; when intellectual pleasures are disagreeable, those of sense will take the lead. The man, who in this age is enamoured of the tranquil joys of study and retirement, may in the next, should learning be fashionable no longer, feel an ambition of being foremost at an horse-course; or, if such could be the absurdity of the times, of being himself a jockey. Reason and appetite are therefore masters of our revels in turn; and as we incline to the one or pursue the other, we rival angels or imitate the brutes. In the pursuit of intellectual pleasure lies every virtue; of sensual, every vice.

It is this difference of pursuit which marks the morals and characters of mankind; which lays the line between the enlightened philosopher and the half-taught citizen; between the civil citizen and illiterate peasant; between the law-obeying peasant and the wandering savage of Africa, an animal less mischievous indeed than the tiger, because endued with fewer powers of doing mischief. The man, the nation, must therefore be good, whose chiefest luxuries consist in the refinement of reason: and reason can never be universally cultivated unless guided by taste, which may be considered as the link between science and common sense, the medium through which learning should ever be seen by society.

Taste will therefore often be a proper standard, when others fail, to judge of a nation's improvement or degeneracy in morals. We have often no permanent characteristics, by which to compare the virtues or the vices of our ancestors with our own. A generation may rise and pass away without leaving any

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traces of what it really was; and all complaints of our deterioration may be only topics of declamation, or the cavillings of disappointment: but in Taste we have standing evidence; we can with precision compare the literary performances of our fathers with our own, and from their excellence or defects determine the moral, as well as the literary, merits of either.

If, then, there ever comes a time when Taste is so far depraved among us that critics shall load every work of genius with unnecessary comment, and quarter their empty performances with the substantial merit of an author, both for subsistence and applause; if there comes a time when censure shall speak in storms, but praise be whispered in the breeze, while real excellence often finds shipwreck in either; if there be a time when the Muse shall seldom be heard, except in plaintive elegy, as if she wept her own decline, while lazy compilations supply the place of original thinking; should there ever be such a time, may succeeding critics, both for the honour of our morals as well as our learning, say, that such a period bears no resemblance to the present age!

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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